DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 184 703 PS 011 343

TITLE	The Status of the American Family: Policies, Facts, Opinions, and Issues. NEA Research Memo.
INSTITUTION	National Education Association, Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE	Jul 79
NOTE	93p.
AVAILABLE FROM	NEA Distribution Center, The Academic Building, Saw Mill Road, New Haven, CT 06516 (Stock No. 1668-8-00 for NEA members, $3.75; Stock No. 1613-0-00 for nonmembers, $10.00)
EDRS PRICE	MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Change; *Children; Divorce; Ethnic Groups; Family (Sociological Unit); *Family Characteristics; *Family Health; *Family Life; Family School Relationship; *Government Role; Marriage; *Public Policy
IDENTIFIERS	Cults

ABSTRACT

This report of the National Education Association gathers information from a variety of sources and studies giving special emphasis to families with children. Section I, Federal Policy Issues and the Family, includes a brief summary of the Carter administration's plans and activities and the following essays: Is Government Helping or Hurting Families? by A. Sidney Johnson and Theodora J. Ooms; Impact on Families: A Community Assessment, a selection from "Penney's Forum"; and All Our Children: The American Family Under Pressure by Kenneth Keniston. Section II, Analyzing Demographics and Trends: Myths and Realities about Family Change and Stability covers issues surrounding marriage and divorce, living arrangements of adults and children, working mothers, marital life cycles, and difficulties in measuring family change. Section III, Findings from Opinion Polls, Facts and Figures: Pieces of the Family Picture, includes Profiles of Children in the United States from the National Council on Children's Television Forum, which reports data on children in relation to family life, health, education, justice and television. Section III also includes selections from two General Mills American Family Reports: one from 1967-77 on Raising Children in a Changing Society and one from 1978-79 Family Health in an Era of Stress. Section IV is a compilation of resources on multicultural issues in the status of the American Family. Section V is a description of one family's experience with cults and their effect on youth. The appendix lists Resources for Public Policy Activities. (SS)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

nea helping teachers teach
RESEARCH MEMO
National Education Association
1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W. • Washington, D.C. 20036

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

ED184703

The Status of the American Family:

Policies, Facts, Opinions, and Issues

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
National Education Association
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

PS011343

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

JOHN RYOR, *President*
TERRY E. HERNDON, *Executive Director*

NEA RESEARCH

Frank W. Kovacs, *Director*

William E. Dresser
Assistant Manager
Graphics

Peg J. Jones
Manager
Research Services

Norma W. Plater
Assistant Manager
Administrative Services

Richard E. Scott
Manager
Computer and Statistical Programming

Simeon P. Taylor, III
Manager
Information Center

Donald P. Walker
Manager
Research Services

THE STATUS OF THE AMERICAN FAMILY: POLICIES, FACTS, OPINIONS, AND ISSUES

Peg J. Jones
Carol Ann Norman
Project Directors

Sale Copies: NEA members–$3.75 (Stock No. 1668-8-00)
Nonmembers –$10.00 (Stock No. 1613-0-00)

Payment must accompany all orders except for those on your official institutional purchase order forms; no orders can be billed for less than $10. Shipping and handling charges will be added to all billed purchase orders. NEA member discount: 10-49 copies, 10%; 50-99 copies, 15%; 100 or more copies, 20%. Order from the NEA Distribution Center, The Academic Building, Saw Mill Road, West Haven, CT 06516.

Reproduction: No part of this report may be reproduced in any form without written permission from NEA Research, except by NEA-affiliated associations. Any reproduction of the report materials must include the usual credit line.

Copyright © 1979 by the
National Education Association
All Rights Reserved

FOREWORD

The Status of the American Family: Policies, Facts, Opinions, and Issues is the outcome of action directed by the 1978 NEA Representative Assembly. Data in the report have been gathered from a variety of sources and studies, many of which have been reprinted here. Other sections of the report have been written to ensure that the intent of the Representative Assembly would be carried out, specifically the resource information on multicultural issues and minority families. No attempt has been made, however, to analyze the similarities or differences among the many types of families and conditions that exist in our society.

The report is organized into five sections. Dr. Peg Jones and Dr. Carol Ann Norman—codirectors of the project—are responsible for the material in Sections I through IV. A special acknowledgement for Section V, Cults and the Family, is made to Sharlie West, who experienced the events described in "One Family's Experience" and had the courage to put them in writing.

The intent of Section V is to alert teachers and parents to the potential damages associated with some of the cult groups and the previously undefined consequences of lowering the legal age from 21 to 18. This was accomplished in 1971 with the passage of the Twenty-Sixth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. The change in the age of majority has had certain negative as well as positive ramifications, as many families who have lost one or more of their children to a cult group well know. The realization that their 18-year-old is no longer legally a child is reached with great trauma when they attempt to take legal action to regain their children. Highlighting this fact—as we do in Section V—will perhaps help lead to greater awareness and sensitivity, and the potential problems of the lower age of majority may be avoided.

Frank W. Kovacs
Director of Research

July 1979

CONTENTS

Foreword

Introduction 7

SECTION I. FEDERAL POLICY ISSUES AND THE FAMILY 9

Advocates' Hopes and Major Concerns / Research Reports / White House Conference on Families: 1981 / Political Climate and Progress / Current Activities

"Is Government Helping or Hurting Families?" by A. Sidney Johnson, III, and Theodora J. Ooms ... 14

"Impact on Families: A Community Assessment," selection from *Penney's Forum* 16

"All Our Children: The American Family Under Pressure," by Kenneth Keniston 18

SECTION II. ANALYZING DEMOGRAPHICS AND TRENDS: MYTHS AND REALITIES ABOUT FAMILY CHANGE AND STABILITY 23

FAMILY CHANGE AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM 25

FAMILY CHANGE AND STABILITY 26

Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage / Living Arrangements of Adults and Children / Working Mothers / Marital Life Cycle / Difficulties in Measuring Family Change / Summary and Conclusion

SECTION III. FINDINGS FROM OPINION POLLS, FACTS AND FIGURES: PIECES OF THE FAMILY PICTURE 35

"Profiles of Children in the United States," compiled by Nicholas B. Van Dyck, Maria P. Robbins, Amber Gordon, and Mary Ellen Hannibal 36

"Raising Children in a Changing Society," selections from the General Mills American Family Report, 1976-77 45

"Family Health in an Era of Stress," selections from the General Mills American Family Report, 1978-79 71

SECTION IV. RESOURCES FOR MULTICULTURAL ISSUES: MINORITY FAMILIES 83

SECTION V. CULTS AND THE FAMILY 89

"One Family's Experience," by Sharlie West 92

Appendix: Resources for Public Policy Activities 99

INTRODUCTION

Throughout the past five years special interest groups, national councils, individual scholars, experts, demographers, federal policymakers, the media, and the public have all focused widespread attention on the status of the American family. Research reports, conferences, popular and scholarly journals, and media specials have covered a variety of approaches to describing and documenting information about the family. It has become increasingly obvious that the simple word *family* is a complex subject of great concern to our society.

Views about the status of the family are often controversial, conflicting, confusing, and inevitably emotional. In part, this is because current information is incomplete and open to a variety of interpretations. But perhaps more to the point is a basic condition which affects almost all of us. Family is not just a concept. It is a deeply personal experience which arouses strong feelings in every individual. Culture, traditions, morals, ethics, religion, values, and attitudes all come into play in matters concerning the family. While these intense emotions make the sorting of facts from feelings a problem, the signs of caring are important. They may signal a society shrugging off its apathy in the face of rapid technological changes and preparing for a new stage of maturity in confronting the deeper meaning of changes in our society.

There are those specialists who believe that the real importance of changes in the structures and roles of families goes far beyond matters of statistics, forms, and functions. Perhaps, they say, the more profound implications for schools and society lie in the changing values and attitudes which accompany this changing family status. If this is so, it may be only a matter of time until children assimilate these new values and attitudes. Then, the challenges to schools and society will be of a social-psychological as well as an intellectual nature. Whatever the case, this report includes information which describes developments in all these areas.

It should be understood at the outset that special emphasis will be given to facts, opinions, and feelings concerning families containing children. This is done with full knowledge that family advocates frequently express the view that other interest advocates weight presentations of information away from families as a unit to concentration on children's issues. Nonetheless, schools and teachers are particularly concerned with family environments as they might affect the experiences and development of children who come to them for teaching and learning. It is on this basis that families with children will be the major but not exclusive focus of this report.

In an effort to make the most effective and efficient use of the rapidly developing literature on the family, selected reprints of existing articles/reports have been included in their entirety. In other cases, the most appropriate portions

of already published works have been abstracted. Diversity and variety are provided by the inclusion of technical information, opinion polls, commentaries, and a vignette.

Among the many categories of information highlighted for review are the following:

- Policy issues and resources for policy-related activities with particular emphasis on the role of the federal government in creating and maintaining policies and programs which impact the family
- Analysis of national trends in the American family: strengths and weaknesses
- Facts, figures, and results of opinion polls on families and children
- Multicultural issues surrounding the family: resources for study
- Cults and the family

SECTION I. FEDERAL POLICY ISSUES AND THE FAMILY

Advocates' Hopes and Major Concerns

Research Reports

White House Conference on Families: 1981

Political Climate and Progress

Current Activities

SECTION I. FEDERAL POLICY ISSUES AND THE FAMILY

During his campaign for the presidency, Jimmy Carter expressed his concern about the status of the American family. It was his expressed intent to call a White House Conference on the Family similar to White House Conferences on Children which have occurred every ten years since the Theodore Roosevelt administration in 1909. It was also well recognized that Vice-President Mondale had acted as an advocate in the Senate for family and children's issues by supporting legislative initiatives. Family advocates looked forward to a Carter administration which would showcase family policy as a social concern.

Advocates' Hopes and Major Concerns

Additional hope was generated because of President Carter's expressed intention to champion welfare reform. Family and child advocates had long expressed their dissatisfaction with existing legislative policies and federal programs under welfare and social rehabilitative services. It was their view that among other weaknesses, the following major shortcomings should be corrected: income provisions for the poor should be increased; eligibility requirements for children's benefits which promoted disruptions of the family unit by mandating the absence of fathers should be altered; and support services for health, nutrition, and psychological needs of family members should be expanded. There appeared to be consensus among many advocates surrounding these general needs for improvements.

Minorities and women, often overrepresented in the ranks of poverty because of historical discriminatory practices, had high concerns about additional areas of negative impact under social welfare policies. They expressed more extensive reasons why existing services tended to weaken rather than strengthen families. Among the conditions which they cited were the following: tendencies to remove children during times of family crisis and to keep them in inadequate foster homes or institutions over unnecessarily long periods of time; provision of inadequate incentives and services for low-income families to become eligible to adopt children; and general bureaucratic insensitivities to multicultural differences in values, attitudes, and mores.

All together, these factors were some of the major reasons why family advocates had high hopes for a new administration which might initiate actions to bring about welfare and social services reform at the policy level for families and children.

Research Reports

To buttress these claims of advocates, two special research reports emerged. Both dealt extensively with the social and economic conditions which place today's families in jeopardy, and both advocated policy reforms at the federal, state, and local levels through new and corrective legislation. The first publication, *Toward A National Policy for Children and Families,* is available from the National Academy of Sciences in Washington, D.C. The second report, compiled

by the Carnegie Council on Children chaired by Kenneth Keniston, is entitled *All Our Children: The American Family Under Pressure*, and a reprint of its findings is included in this section. (This publication by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich is now available in Harvest paperback through local bookstores.) To accompany the Carnegie Council report, an action guide, the *Children's Political Checklist*, was disseminated by the Coalition for Children and Youth (815 15th Street, N.W. in Washington, D.C.). This publication suggests methods of carrying out needs assessments concerning the employment status of parents, as well as health and social services at the state/local levels. Lists of organizations and resources which can be of assistance in these tasks are also provided.

White House Conference on Families: 1981

In addition to these reports another important event occurred shortly after the president took office in 1976. The Carter administration scheduled a White House Conference on the Family to be held in 1979, responsibility for which was placed in the Office of the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, headed by Joseph Califano.

By 1978 neither an Advisory Council nor an Executive Director for the Conference had been selected as mandated. Further, minority groups expressed discontent because of their beliefs that multicultural views and issues were not sufficiently represented in planning activities. As a result of a congressional oversight hearing scheduled by Senator Cranston, chairperson of the Special Subcommittee on Human Resources, the title of the Conference was changed the same year to the White House Conference on Families and the schedule was changed to 1981.

Shortly after the hearing, it was announced that former Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare Wilbur Cohen would be chairperson of the National Advisory Council, and Ms. Patsy Fleming, formerly of Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm's office, was selected as chairperson of the White House Conference on Families. Within two weeks after the announcement of their selection for these positions, both resigned—Dr. Cohen because of ill health and Ms. Fleming allegedly because of the additional appointment of a codirector. Most recently, in April 1979, former Congressman Jim Guy Tucker of Arkansas was named chairperson of the White House Conference on Families.

Political Climate and Progress

Over this period, congressional movement on social legislation has been slow. Superordinate concerns with the budget, energy, and international affairs have dominated the legislative agenda.

At the same time, right wing ultraconservatives have organized strong propaganda and political opposition to all legislation concerning families and children. Such activities are patterned after the attack leveled at the ill-fated Child and Family Services Act of 1975 sponsored by Mondale-Brademas. A special report on that attack has been issued and is available under the title *Background Materials Concerning the Child and Family Services Act of 1975, H.R. 2966* (prepared by

the Subcommittee on Select Education for the Committee on Education and Labor, House of Representatives, 1976). The importance of this report lies in the fact that similar unfounded rhetoric is removed from the shelf and "packaged" with only slight alterations to accommodate any new family or child legislation at hand. Advertising, fund raising, and letter-writing campaigns are immediately mounted to counteract any federal legislative activities associated with family or children's issues. If and when the content of the legislation is examined, allegations are based on the same themes, which rarely have any factual foundation. Since many people do not take the time to investigate or read proposed legislation, emotional responses become numerous and high. The tone of opposition mail suggests that the content and format of letters for attack campaigns are supplied, since the usual themes show slight variations of the following untrue, albeit alarming, allegations:

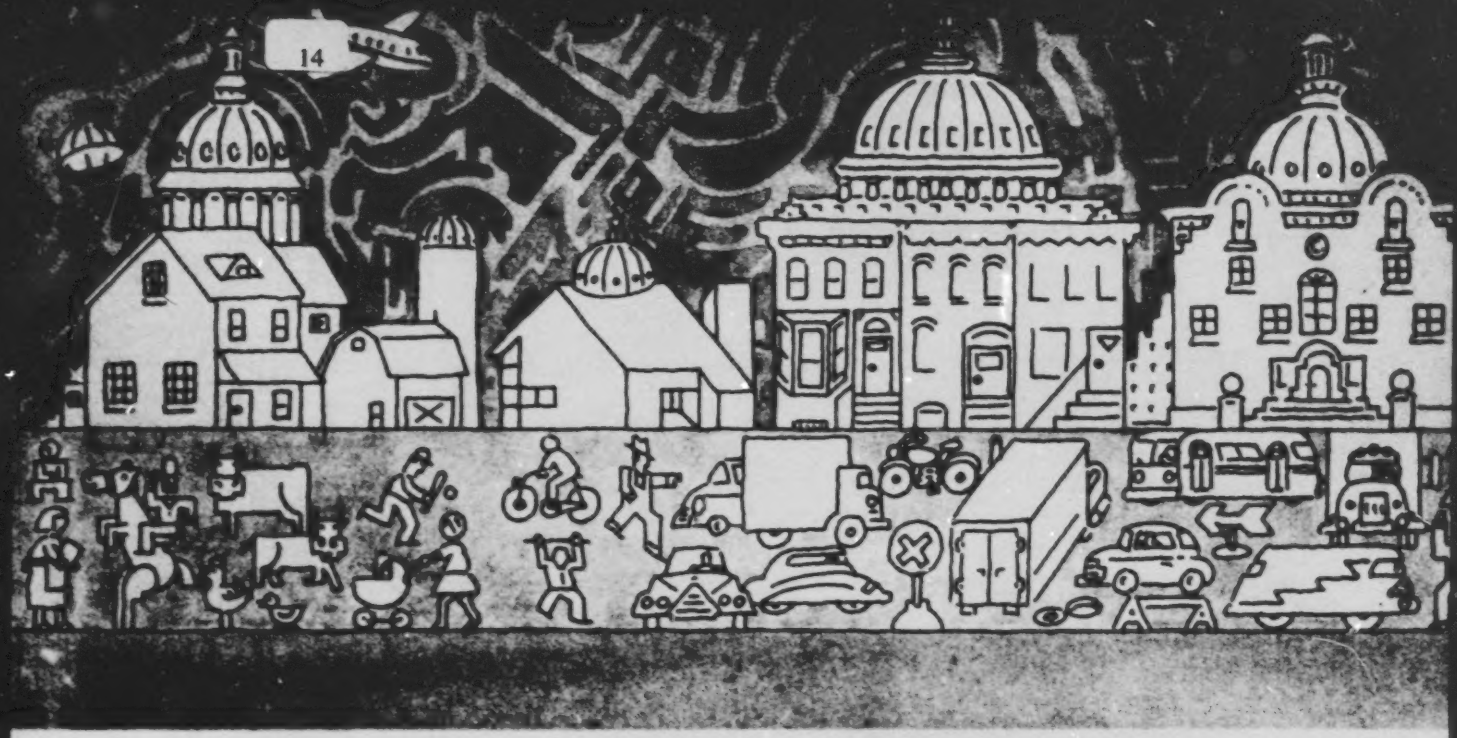
- Communist inspirations are behind moves to remove children from the influence and authority of their parents and the church by providing day-care services which amount to a state takeover and unconstitutional intervention into the rights of the family. (This attack was used against the International Year of the Child as well.)
- Federal legislation will give children the support and right to sue their parents if children are disciplined or required to take on household chores such as taking out the garbage.

What might otherwise seem humorous in such extremes has been taken quite seriously by unbelievable numbers of protesters. Indeed, the fears of many legislators as a result of these attacks have led them to avoid activities involving families or children. The political risks appear high in comparison to the vote-gathering attributes of such social reform legislation. Then, too, family, children, and women's advocates have not yet mastered the skills of broad-scale coalescing for the purposes of supportive legislative activities of mutual concern to all. Couple these conditions with a stringent economic climate, and the prospects for legislative progress appear limited.

Current Activities

While legislative policymaking activities have been few despite former high hopes, research and study activities are still quite numerous. It is not unusual to see experts and researchers enter the arena of a particular social issue which shows promise of becoming a political priority at the policy level. How long these activities will sustain themselves in the absence of action at the federal level has yet to be determined. For the moment at least, private support from foundations has contributed much to the ongoing policy research and study which is being conducted. Whether such research will come to fruition in the form of new federal roles and policies remains to be answered in the future. For now, its focus and recommendations can provide insight into what are viewed nationally as family issues.

Two reprints which follow are examples of the kinds of policy-related research activities which are currently being conducted. The Appendix contains additional sources of such information together with policy-related resources on two important family issues—Adolescent Pregnancy and Violence in the Family.



Is Government Helping or Hurting Families?

by A. Sidney Johnson, III and Theodora J. Ooms

The Family Impact Seminar grew out of hearings held in 1973 by the Senate Subcommittee on Children and Youth, chaired by then-Senator Walter Mondale. The Seminar's goal is to make government programs more responsive to families' needs. Initially, they are assessing where we stand now, looking at federal legislation already in place or pending, and analyzing its impact on families.

It is becoming increasingly clear that a wide range of government policies have direct and sometimes profound effects on families. Policy at all levels has responded to changes in the family and may have inadvertently created or added impetus to others. We do not know nearly enough about the ways in which governmental actions are making families' lives easier or more difficult.

Our analysis of the 1,044 federal programs in the Catalog on Federal Domestic Assistance revealed 268 existing programs that have potential direct impact on families.[1] This analysis did not even include a review of the impact on families of tax policies, nor of the much wider range of state and local government programs and the many court decisions that profoundly affect families.

Faced with the fact that over 200 federal programs potentially affect families, some observers fall back on an erroneous assumption: "It is true," they say, "that there are federal programs directly affecting families, but they don't affect most families. They are just those programs in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare designed to help poor families... programs like welfare, and Medicaid or food stamps in the Department of Agriculture." But the facts refute this statement. It is, of course, true that HEW has many programs directly affecting families. Our inventory reviewed 119. But the inventory also showed that a majority of programs with potential direct impact on families—149 to be exact—are administered outside of HEW and as a general rule are not limited exclusively to poor families. These family-related programs are found in 16 other departments and agencies, including the Veterans Administration, and the Departments of Housing and Urban Affairs, Labor, Interior, Justice, Treasury and Transportation.

It is true that unlike many other nations, we do not have a Department on Families or a Family Ministry in our government. Similarly, we have not adopted an official national family policy. In fact, our Constitution does not include a single reference to families.

Key Questions

What is meant by "potential direct impact on families"? To us it means that a policy has been reviewed in terms of the following four key questions. Initial responses to these questions indicate whether a more thorough family impact review should be undertaken.[2]

1. **What effect does the program have on family membership and stability?**
   - ▶ What incentives or disincentives are provided for couples to marry, have children, separate or divorce; for family members to live together or live independently?
2. **How does the program affect the ability of families to meet their economic needs?**
   - ▶ Does it increase or decrease the

A. Sidney Johnson, III is Director of the Family Impact Seminar at George Washington University and consultant to HEW Secretary Joseph A. Califano, Jr. and Vice President Walter F. Mondale. Previously, he was a staff assistant to then Senator Mondale and a Special Assistant to HEW Secretary Wilbur Cohen. He serves on the Board of Directors of the Coalition for Children and Youth and the Council on Social Work Education.

Theodora J. Ooms, Associate Director of the Family Impact Seminar at George Washington University, holds a master's degree from Oxford University and is a Certified Social Worker. Formerly Coordinator of Clinical Services and of the Preschool Prevention Project of the Philadelphia Child Guidance Clinic, she has practiced family therapy and served as consultant to the Child Abuse Team at Philadelphia Children's Hospital.

JCPenney educational materials are available as a public service from local Penney store managers.

level of economic resources available to families?
- ▶ Does it provide incentives or disincentives for work?
- ▶ Do some family members get greater opportunities for work than others?

3. **How does the program affect the nurturant, health and socializing functions of families?**
   - ▶ Does it supplement and support families' efforts to provide these services to members, or does it supplant the family and provide these services independently?
4. **When the program is aimed at an individual in need, does it reflect a clear understanding of the roles that other family members may play in contributing to the individual's need or problems?**
   - ▶ Does the program reflect understanding of the roles that other family members—including family members not living in the household—may be able to play in alleviating the need or helping to solve the problem?

How Do Three Major Government Programs Impact Families Now?

By asking the four key questions outlined above, we can begin to analyze the impact of government programs on families. Let us briefly examine three major, long-standing programs which have impact on almost every family.

1. Health

The Medicare law, for example, provides financial assistance to patients who are cared for in a nursing home following hospitalization. No assistance, however, is allowed to cover the costs of a home health aide if hospitalized patients return home after a short stay in a nursing home or do not go to a nursing home at all.

Impact

This provision provides a tremendous financial disincentive to family and health aide care in the home. Home care is less expensive, and as most doctors will verify, often offers patients the greatest opportunity and motivation for rehabilitation and recovery.

2. Federal Income Tax Code

At certain levels of income, the total deduction available to a married couple is not equal to the deduction they would receive if they were living together unmarried. For example, in 1975, if a man earning $10,000 a year married a woman who also earned $10,000, they paid an extra $340 in taxes.

Impact

The so-called "marriage penalty" in the income tax provides a disincentive to some couples to marry. A careful study would be needed to establish the extent to which these provisions cause couples to postpone or avoid marriage, or cause married couples to divorce. Nonetheless, these provisions, intentionally or otherwise, constitute a tax disincentive to marriage in certain circumstances and as such, have a possible family impact.

3. Social Security

First and foremost, social security has provided financial assistance, health care and dignity to millions of elderly families. In so doing, it has given them the choice of living with their children or living independently. But there are other family-related aspects of social security which must be questioned. For example, regulations which affect wives who are full-time homemakers include:
- ▶ There is no recognition of the value of a housewife's work until the husband retires, in which case he receives 50% more than if he were single.
- ▶ Under social security, a housewife has no disability coverage.
- ▶ If a housewife has been married less than twenty years, then gotten divorced, she is not entitled to a share of her husband's retirement benefits at age 65.

Impact

Hiring a homemaker to keep the family of a hospitalized mother together can be very costly; often the children have to be placed outside the home with relatives, friends or strangers. A foster care study in one state showed that the reason almost 40% of the children were placed in foster homes or institutions was the hospitalization of their mothers. Measured at market value, the value of a mother's work becomes quite evident when a housewife is sick.

Notes

1. *Toward an Inventory of Federal Programs with Direct Impact on Families*, Staff Report—Family Impact Seminar, February 1978.
2. After completing the Inventory, our Seminar chose the following three policies for in-depth family impact analysis: foster care, teenage pregnancy, and policies affecting work schedules. We are preparing "pilot family impact statements" on each. We are also developing a set of basic family impact questions on these three policies and in the areas of education and health which will be available to individuals and organizations who want to examine these problems in terms of family impact.

Impact on Families: A Community Assessment

How can you find out how families in your community are being affected by local and federal policies, institutions and resources? Because of the complexity of families' needs and functions, there are clearly an almost infinite variety of ways in which a particular community may be supportive of or destructive to family functioning.

You may be concerned about the impact of the quality and quantity of health, educational and social services on families. Do you wonder whether the availability of jobs, transportation, business and recreational facilities, or the housing and zoning patterns affect families in positive or negative ways? Has something changed the nature of your community recently?

Whether the change is perceived as positive or negative or the conditions or resources are a result of public or private policies, you can determine how selected factors are shaping the families in a community.

A great deal can be learned from an examination of agencies and organizations at a community level. Groups of families and/or professionals who staff the agencies are often in the best position to know and describe very important aspects of "impact." The Family Impact Seminar is currently attempting to develop sample resource materials to help community groups do selective community level impact assessment, which involves some of the steps described below. These steps are illustrated in the activity on page 7, "How Do Your Community Schools Shape Families?"

Step 1. Determine the kinds of families who live in the community under study.

Consider diversity in size, membership, structure, socio-economic, racial and ethnic background. For example, are there large numbers of single parents, two-earner families, first generation immigrants who have difficulty with the language, young families with pre-schoolers, older families?

Step 2. Identify which institutions or services stand out as being the most dominant in the group of families you are focusing on.

Step 3. Agree upon and make explicit your own value assumptions, to serve as a guide in assessing impact.

Description and evaluation of impact involves some subjective value judgments. For example, with regard to issues affecting teenage pregnancy, some would value a teenager's right to privacy over the parents' right to information. With regard to welfare, some prefer services "in kind" such as food stamps rather than a direct cash aid.

Step 4. Read what some of the experts in this area believe are important impact issues on your topic.

Step 5. Interview and survey consumers of the services, staff at all levels in the agency/institution, and other interested community persons.

The Family Impact Seminar is developing a checklist of specific family impact questions which might serve as a guide in designing your survey. This checklist will be available in the summer of 1979.

Step 6. Identify the level of policy responsible for a particular important effect.

For example, are the visiting rules in the hospital a result of state regulation, informal professional preference, or an official hospital policy?

Describe and discuss both the policies and practices which you conclude are supportive of families and those which are not in your final report.

The federal, state or local officials and administrative staff of the agency or program should be informed of the findings and involved in a dialogue concerning recommendations. If possible, this group or organization which conducted the assessment should monitor the extent to which changes are made. Or, if the group is not ongoing, those members with particular interest might volunteer to continue their commitment to the recommended changes.

Editor's Note: The Family Impact Seminar suggests the following as a beginning model for developing your own survey. The Seminar's basic value assumption regarding the family/school relationship is defined. Questions in each category are aimed at determining whether this value is reflected in a particular community's school system. Before developing survey questions, your group members will need to identify their own basic value assumption on any topic to be assessed.

The Family/School Relationship

Basic Value Assumption
The family/school relationship should be conceived of as an equal partnership, based on a mutual respect and support for each other's expertise, role and responsibilities, and a mutual understanding that quality education requires the involvement of both teachers and family members.

Fill in your basic value assumption about the family/school relationship or another topic that concerns you.

_____
_____
_____

What questions will you ask to see if your local schools (or other institutions or policies) are in line with your values on this topic?

I. Parent/School Communication

1. What are the various channels of communication in both directions between parents and school staff?
2. What kinds of training—both college and in-service training—do teachers get in techniques of talking with and listening to parents?

1. _____
2. _____

3. What flexibility are teachers allowed (or encouraged to demonstrate) in arranging to meet or communicate with parents? Are conferences held only during work days, even though, in increasing numbers of families, both parents or the single parent work full-time?
4. Are fathers, other family members and/or the students themselves included in school conferences?
5. Other questions...

3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

II. Family/School Support

1. To what extent are parents involved or active in school affairs through PTA, school board, committees or volunteer activities?
2. Are employed parents kept informed of school events or activities so they can make plans to attend?
3. To what extent is the school supportive of families of all types with regard to vacations, after-school hours, emergency snow days or in-service days?
4. Other questions...

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

III. Curriculum and School Structure

1. To what extent are parents informed about the curriculum and given a significant role in decisions about its content?
2. What aspects of the school curriculum materials in the school library teach about family life, child and family development, family responsibilities and sex education?
3. To what extent do these materials (and teacher attitudes) present realistic or stereotyped views of family life, sex roles and the diversity of families today?
4. To what extent does the school attempt to break down the intergenerational boundaries or to create family-like relationships within the school; for example: by encouraging older children to work with younger children, senior citizens (grandparents) to volunteer in the classroom; or libraries to provide multi-age grouping or recreational activities?
5. Other questions...

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

By assessing the ways institutions and policies affect the everyday lives of families in your community, we all become more prepared to seek changes in policies and attitudes that exert unnecessary pressures on families. To the extent to which these efforts are successful, they will contribute to the health and well-being of families, and of society as a whole. For, as Margaret Mead said so well, "As families go, so goes the nation."

Suggested Resource: Sara Lawrence, *Worlds Apart—Relationships between Families and Schools* (New York: Lightfoot Basic Books, 1978).

All Our Children: The American Family Under Pressure

by Kenneth Keniston

This article is a summary of the first Report of the Carnegie Council on Children, published by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, New York, 1977.

The Carnegie Council on Children was created in 1972 by the Carnegie Corporation of New York to undertake a broad investigation of what American society is doing to and for children, and what government, business, and individuals can do to protect and support family life.

An independent study group, the Council was headed by Kenneth Keniston, the psychologist noted for his studies of dissenting youth and social change. Its members formed one of the most diverse groups to study children in recent years with professional interests ranging from education and medicine to law and economics.

The results of the Council's five years of work are incorporated in ***All Our Children: The American Family Under Pressure*** by Kenneth Keniston and the Council, published by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Beginning with a succinct historical analysis of the American family and its evolving functions, Kenneth Keniston examines the effects of a complex technological society on family life. Considering everything from TV and food additives to unemployment rates and the income tax structure, he reveals a series of myths which hinder families and our ability to think clearly about their needs.

These myths obscure the overall social and economic system that exerts a crucial influence on what happens to parents and children. Keniston argues that until policy makers and planners in both the public and private sectors pay serious attention to the broad social and economic pressures on children and their parents, our public policies will be unable to do much more than help individuals repair damage that the environment often inflicts.

Three myths which hinder clear thinking about children and families in America.

The myths are:

- *Families are Self-Sufficient*
  Contrary to popular ideas that families are self-sufficient and solely responsible for their own problems, the parent today, says Keniston "is usually a coordinator without voice or authority, a maestro trying to conduct an orchestra of players who have never met and who play from a multitude of different scores, each in a notation the conductor cannot read. If parents are frustrated, it is no wonder: for although they have the responsibility for their children's lives, they hardly ever have the voice, the authority, or the power to make others listen to them."

- *The United States Provides Equal Opportunity to All*
  Despite some advances in the past decade, according to *All Our Children*, one child out of four in America is "being actively harmed by a 'stacked deck' created by the failings of our society. To try to change those children who are born unequal is to avoid the more important task of changing the structural forces that keep them that way. Schools, the institutions traditionally called upon to correct social inequity, are unsuited to the task; without economic opportunity to follow educational opportunity, the myth of equality can never become real. Far more than a hollow promise of future opportunity for their children, parents need jobs, income, and services. And children, whose backgrounds have stunted their sense of the future need to be taught by example that they are good for more than they dared to dream."

- *Government and Business Generally Stay Out of Family Affairs*
  Finally, the book notes that the supposed "neutrality" of government and business towards family related matters is frequently misperceived. In fact these institutions are powerful factors in the lives of children and families, often positive, sometimes negative, but worthy of more careful attention.

Drawing on this analysis of problems facing us as a nation, The Carnegie Council on Children developed the following series of recommendations which form the core of a proposed national policy for children and their families.

A Policy for Children and Families

Here in a brief review is the national program–the broad, integrated, explicit family policy–we believe public advocates should support for the sake of children:

1) Public advocates should support jobs for parents and a decent living standard for all families.

Needed: Jobs for parents including. . .

We need to adopt a new "decency standard" for thinking about poverty–a line based, in any given year, on 50 percent of the median income of a family of four. No children in the nation should have to live in a household with significantly less income than this. The means to achieve this are:

. . .full employment

We need to reduce unemployment for heads of households to no more than 1 percent or 1½ percent, bringing the general unemployment rate down to between 3½ percent and 5 percent.

To do this, the government should consider a mixture of policies: increasing the amount of money in circulation for economic stimulus when the economy is operating far below capacity, giving business an incentive to hire more people, and providing incentives for industries to move into areas where there are high concentrations of unemployed persons.

As a back-up, the federal government should provide guaranteed work, at wages of at least half the average for industrial workers in that year, for at least one parent in every family that contains a child if the parent has been without employment for over three months.

In national economic planning, full employment should be considered as important as keeping prices stable, and a major effort should be made to develop and perfect regulations and administrative structures that can effectively control inflation by some means other than allowing unemployment to rise.

. . .fair employment

We must reduce job barriers and job ceilings for racial minorities and women. Everyone supporting children should have a chance at the best rewards for hard work and all children should have a decent future to look forward to.

Specific charges of job discrimination can be dealt with by improving the enforcement of our current laws and regulations, in particular by speeding cases through the courts and giving the government more flexible remedies than total cutoff of government contracts with employers who show evidence of job discrimination.

Deeper reaching job discrimination can be attacked through encouraging affirmative action. Furthermore, new legislation is needed to change the usual methods of recruiting employees and establishing job qualifications. New regulations are needed to give a government agency that is not already saddled with handling specific complaints the responsibility for instituting lawsuits wherever there is reason to believe that a broad-based pattern of discrimination exists.

. . .a decent minimum income level for all.

The country should provide a back-up system to full employment that puts an income floor under every American family.

Such a system would incorporate or reform elements of the federal income tax system, welfare, food stamps, workmen's compensation, and veterans' benefits. It should maintain incentives to work by reducing its benefits gradually as income from work goes up. Such a system would support the working poor as well as the unemployed and very poor.

A parent with the primary responsibility for raising young children should be guaranteed a passable family income if she (or he) decides to stay at home. Adults should not be eligible for income supports, however, if they are capable of working and not actively seeking a job or taking care of young children; such a work test would apply to the wealthy as well as the poor. Neither should benefits go to absent parents with a source of income who do not make contributions to supporting their children.

A sample system of income supports worth considering is a credit income tax. Replacing the current system, it would tax virtually all income, allowing deductions only for the costs of earning income, including child-care expenses, and for charitable contributions. All taxpayers, whatever their income, would pay the same flat percentage and all would be entitled to a tax credit, in cash if they had no other source of support or in a credit applied against the taxes they owed if they did have income. The example shown in Chapter 5 in the full Report of the Carnegie Council on Children would tax almost all four-person families with incomes under $15,000 less than the present system. If a credit tax is not immediately feasible, similar results could be obtained by modifying our present tax and transfer-payment systems.

Needed: Flexible working conditions including...

2) Public advocates should support more flexible working conditions.

The demands of a parent's employment should conflict as little as possible with the needs of the family.

Working hours should be made flexible whenever possible so that parents can sometimes manage family affairs during the day, and so they are not forced to leave their children in the care of others at times when they would rather not.

..."flextime"

"Flextime"--the system under which employees can determine the hours they work on any given day so long as the weekly hours add up to a required total in any given period--is one innovation that government and private employers should try more widely.

...part-time jobs

Part-time jobs should be upgraded and structured with full guarantees of job security benefits, and they should provide equal wages for equal work. Federal and state legislation should require governments to set an example by creating both flextime scheduling and part-time jobs for their workers.

...expanded pregnancy leaves

Pregnancy-leave should be expanded and protected. American employers should be required to grant mothers, and possibly fathers, a twelve-week leave of absence to be used in any proportion they choose before and after the birth of a baby, without losing seniority, advancement privileges, or job security.

...longer child rearing leaves

Longer leaves for child rearing need to be protected, too; whenever possible, parents should not lose seniority when they take several years off for child rearing. The easier it is to reenter a job after time off, the freer parents will feel to choose whether to stay at home with their children or go out for wages on the basis of what suits the family best.

Needed: Integrated family services including...

3) Public advocates should support an integrated network of family services.

All families need services. The nation needs to help families get them.

Services should have black and white children, middle-class and poor in the same program as often as possible. The services should be easy to find and get to. There should be a wide range of services for families to choose from, and parents should play a strong role in the services themselves.

...stress on prevention

Above all, family services should stress prevention, making it as easy for a family to go to a clinic for a mild problem as to go to an emergency room after the problem has become serious, and as easy for a court or government agency to provide a homemaker to help a troubled family with its children as it is to put the children in foster care or an institution.

..."quality audits"

Federal standards for quality and fairness should be enacted for all services, public or private. To see that they are meeting these standards, services should be subject to "quality audits" commissioned by local consumers' councils. The councils would also survey needs and coverage in their areas. Both at this local level and above, data on service needs and coverage must be radically improved, as must state plans for services.

Government does not need to provide all services directly to all families. But it does need to pay for surveys of needs, coverage, and impact, for start-up costs in many cases, for test programs, for the consumers' councils to monitor local services, and for establishing services in areas that cannot afford to set them up.

4) Public advocates should support proper health care for children.

Needed: Proper health care for children including. . .

We need to recognize that children's health depends as much on income, environment, and diet as it does on hospitals, nurses, and pediatricians.

We need national health insurance to guarantee that all children get health care, and we need to reorganize the system to emphasize prevention and primary care—the simplest kind of checkups and treatment.

. . .national health insurance

Federal and state legislation should create a network of community health agencies (CHAs), built on existing public health departments or the recently created state Health Service Agencies, and dominated by laymen. CHAs should be given the authority to coordinate both private and public health services, preventing overlaps, controlling costs, maintaining consistent records, and holding service providers to account for what they do.

. . .Community Health Agencies

We need better public data on health-care providers, so parents can select care more thoughtfully and so that monitoring groups can keep services up to the mark. Education for parents and children should be increased so they can interpret their own medical records and learn to perform minor health procedures such as taking throat cultures and using otoscopes. Communities should have twenty-four-hour telephone services to answer medical questions, and health professionals should be trained to increase their collaboration with parents.

. . .health education for parents

5) Public advocates should support improved legal protection for children outside and inside their families.

Needed: Improved legal protection for children including. . .

The law should make every effort to keep families together. No child should be removed from home at either the court's request or a parent's without a clear showing that the child will be better off elsewhere and that less drastic solutions, such as therapy or special education, would not relieve the problem. Courts and social agencies must make every effort to return a child who is removed; or, when this is still impossible after over a year, speed adoption procedures in a new family.

. . .keeping families together

Placement of any child in any institution should be reviewed regularly, with the burden of proof always on those who argue for maintaining the child at the institution. All institutions should ensure children reasonable civil rights as well as rights to treatment, rehabilitation, protection, and a minimum standard of care.

Children's rights to make their own decisions about health care and whether to leave school to work should be expanded.

. . .expanded children's rights to self-determination

Students' rights in relation to schools need protection. Schools should seek the return of truants instead of accepting their absence, and truants should not be referred to juvenile court. Restless older adolescents should be allowed to drop out of school for a year and come back without penalty, at least up to the age of twenty-one. School suspensions should be severely limited and permanent expulsion eliminated altogether. Students' privacy should be protected and their records should be open only to them and their families. Schools' ability to assign students to special classes or require that hyperactive children be given drugs should be restricted.

We need to develop various ways to protect children from the assaults of the technological environment, including children's compensation laws and child-impact statements.

. . .protecting children from assaults of the technological environment

Finally, we need to give all the support we can to lawyers, ombudsmen, agency monitors, and children's advocates, who are often pursuing at a broader level the goals we commend to all individual adults, parents or not, who care about children.

Needed: More support for children's advocates in every field.

Reprinted with permission of the author.

SECTION II. ANALYZING DEMOGRAPHICS AND TRENDS: MYTHS AND REALITIES ABOUT FAMILY CHANGE AND STABILITY

FAMILY CHANGE AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

FAMILY CHANGE AND STABILITY

- Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage
- Living Arrangements of Adults and Children
- Working Mothers
- Marital Life Cycle
- Difficulties in Measuring Family Change
- Summary and Conclusion

SECTION II. ANALYZING DEMOGRAPHICS AND TRENDS: MYTHS AND REALITIES ABOUT FAMILY CHANGE AND STABILITY

FAMILY CHANGE AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

The family in one form or another exists in all societies. Most human beings are born into family groups and spend their lives within a network of family relations. They may marry and produce sons and daughters and so perpetuate the family system.

Comprised of parents and offspring, the family is a unique social group. Predominantly within the family, genetic strains meet and project the older generation into the new, the process of socializing the young begins, and aspects of a cultural heritage are transmitted. The family influences personality development and is the setting for some of the most intense emotional experiences during the course of an individual's lifetime. Little wonder that the family is often associated with strength and stability which command respect in terms of human values.

Associations of strength and stability, however, do not negate the existence of family problems that occur and recur. The family behaviors of some children, husbands, and wives indicate troubled relationships and unhappy experiences. Standards of family conduct seem at times confused, and traditional scripts and roles seem inadequate for some contemporary experiences with family living. Given the importance attached to the family, recurrence of family problems is too serious for unquestioned acceptance.

The significance and intensity of family living and the recurrence of so-called family problems render these topics important subjects for the school curriculum. Drawn from real life, these subjects concern immediate and practical experiences familiar to many students. The subjects focus on an aspect of adulthood that most students are likely to experience. The subjects also address many factors that seem productive of family problems. Thus, the study of the family can be justified under two broad aims of public education: adult preparation, and individual and social improvement.

Enthusiasm for family studies in the school curriculum needs realistic tempering. Many difficulties exist, some of which are quite awesome. If the school accepts the mission of family preparation, then curriculum-makers and teachers need an awareness of the problems that involve both subject and content of the process of curriculum change.

Section II presents demographic and trend data associated with family change and stability. Major focus is on family change; and coverage includes marriage and divorce, living arrangements of adults and children, working mothers, and marital life cycles. The demographic and trend data discussed in this section present a limited treatment of a complex subject, but does so with the hope that family literacy can be promoted through careful curriculum planning and responsible instructional effort.

FAMILY CHANGE AND STABILITY

It becomes apparent from the literature that many approaches to the subject of family change have been used and that a variety of assumptions have been made. One approach, which dominates this section, is descriptive in nature. It identifies an event, describes it, and charts it over time. The assumption is that uncovering observable change or the lack of it is a fundamental stage in the process of understanding family change.

This section explores the subject of family change, beginning with a discussion of several changes in marital events, living arrangements of adults and children, the employment status of mothers, and marital life cycles. It concludes with a review of several research problems that make study of the family difficult. Whenever possible, long-time trend data are presented. Where appropriate, explanations are suggested. If necessary, interpretive issues are noted.

Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage

In the United States, most people marry at some point during their lives. In fact, the United States has one of the highest marriage rates in the world: 9.9 marriages per 1,000 population in 1976.[1]

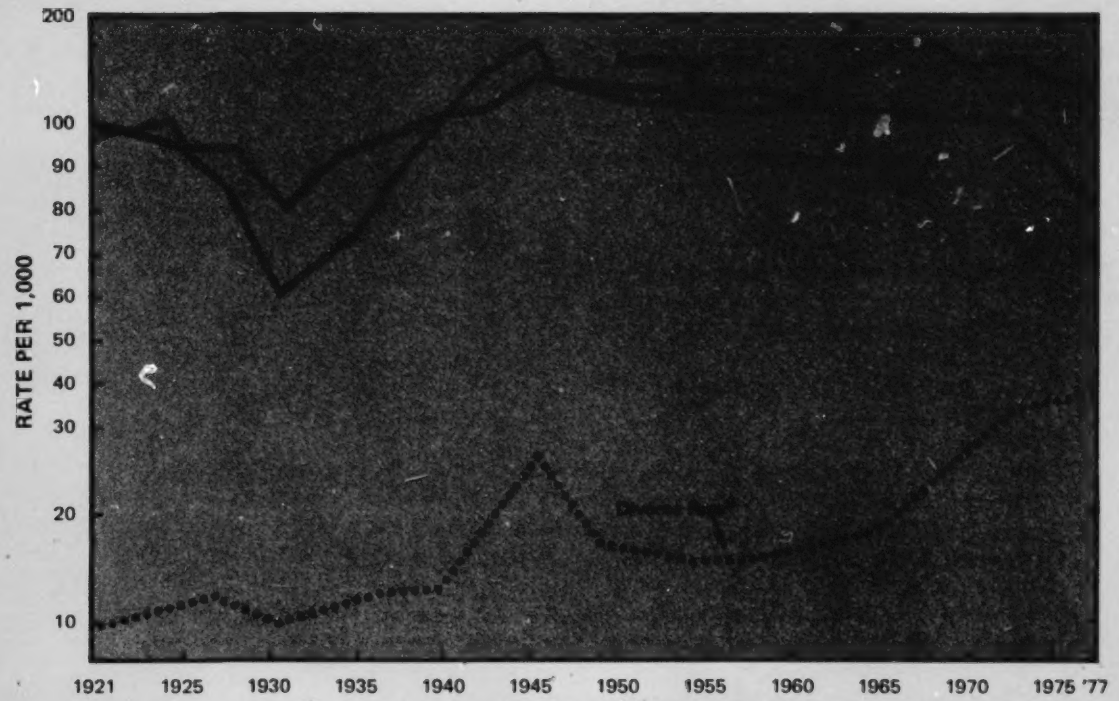
There are several reasons for the high marriage rate. Historically, the economy of the United States has grown and with growth has come an expanding job market. From an economic point of view, young people can be optimistic about their ability to find work, enter marriage, and carry the economic responsibilities of marriage and parenthood. A second explanation involves the computation of marriage rates. Marriage rates are based on the total number of marriages during a given year and do not distinguish between first and second marriages. Because the divorce rate in the United States is high and because most divorced people remarry, the total number of marriages increases. As a result, the rates of marriage are somewhat distorted. For this reason, marriage and remarriage rates are treated separately in the following paragraphs.

The discussions of marriage, divorce, and remarriage rates refer to Figure 1 which traces marriage, divorce, and remarriage trends in the United States from 1921 to 1977. Marriage rates are calculated on the basis of the number of marriages per 1,000 single women 14 to 44 years old. Divorce rates are based on the number of divorces per 1,000 married women 14 to 44 years old. Remarriage rates are based on the number of remarriages per 1,000 widowed or divorced women 14 to 54 years old.

The annual first-marriage rate in the United States is shown in Figure 1. The rate reached a low point during the 1930s, peaked after World War II, and has declined almost continually during the past 30 years. The varying marriage rate suggests periods of marriage postponement. Explanations for the postponement of marriage vary according to the historical period under consideration. During the 1930s, for example, unemployment rates were high; and young adults most likely postponed marriage in light of an uncertain financial future. During World War II, many men postponed marriage because of active military service. The rate decline following the post-World War II peak has continued for nearly three decades. This decline may reflect the influence of a prolonged war in Asia, periods

of inflation, increased college opportunities, and more liberal attitudes toward marriage postponement.

Figure 1.—Rates of First Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage for U.S. Women: 1921-1977



Courtesy of the Population Reference Bureau, Inc., Washington, D.C.

The trend toward first-marriage postponement is especially pronounced among young women. According to U.S. census data, 92 percent of the women who were in their upper twenties in 1960 had married, whereas in 1975 only 87 percent had married. The proportion of single women at ages 24 to 29 has consequently increased from 28 percent in 1960 to 43 percent in 1970.[2]

Reasons for the postponement of first marriage by women may include increased options to early marriage and child-rearing and changing social attitudes toward the independence and self-sufficiency of women. The postponement may also be attributed, in part, to what some have called the "marriage squeeze." That is, the number of women reaching their usual first-marriage ages of 18 to 24 exceeded by 5 to 10 percent the number of men reaching their first-marriage age of 20 to 26.[3]

Although the United States has one of the highest marriage rates in the world, it also has one of the highest divorce rates: 5.0 divorces per 1,000 population in 1976. Computing the number of divorces per 1,000 population is only one of several ways of determining divorce rate. A second method compares the annual ratio of marriages to divorces. For example, if there were in the United States 50 divorces for every 100 marriages, the rate of divorce would be 50 percent. A third method compares the number of divorces and marriages for a specified population, usually married women. Given current data, for example, among every 100 marriages for women, 38 will end in divorce. Of these 38 divorced women, 29 will remarry. Of these 29 women, 13 will divorce again. The original 100 women will have a total of 51 divorces (38 + 13 = 51) and 129 marriages (100 + 29 = 129) which yields a divorce rate of 40 percent (51 ÷ 129 = .399 = .40).[4] Each of these methods is used today, which explains the variance among reported divorce rates.

The annual divorce rate is also shown in Figure 1. Like the first marriage rate, the divorce rate reached a low during the Depression, rose to a peak after World War II, declined somewhat, and then during the late 1950s turned upward and mounted rapidly.

Understanding the reasons for divorce is difficult. The upsurge in divorce has occurred during a period of rapid social change. The heightened political awareness of women and minorities, loosened constraints against divorce, increased use of birth control methods, a war, and a period of civil unrest may all be associated with the divorce rate. While it is difficult to specify exactly how these changes may have precipitated divorce, it is also difficult to deny the possibility that such social changes have had an impact on marital relationships.

Research has isolated two predictors of divorce: age at first marriage and low income. Teenage marriages, for example, are more likely to end in divorce than are marriages between older people.[5] Marriages in which family income is low are more likely to end in divorce than are marriages in which family income is relatively higher.[6]

The exact relationship between age and divorce or between income and divorce is difficult to explain. Youthfulness, for example, may be related to divorce, but it is not necessarily the cause. The lack of maturity associated with youth could be related to divorce in the sense that young adults might exercise less wisdom in mate selection or they might be less able to handle marital stress. On the other hand, many teenage marriages do survive; and a number of marriages between older and presumably more mature spouses do falter. Generally, research has been unable to explain the cause of divorce. Certain divorce predictors have been identified; but the findings suggest complex, rather than simple, relationships among multiple, rather than single, factors.

Earlier it was noted that U.S. marriage rates include first marriages and remarriages. The divorce rate in this country is high, but the remarriage rate is also high, as Figure 1 shows. The remarriage rate tends to rise and fall in a way similar to first-marriage and divorce rates. The rates in the late 1950s, however, take divergent paths—the divorce rate turns upward and marriage and remarriage rates turn downward. The downward movement of the remarriage rate coincides with social changes during the last 30 years—for example, more liberalized attitudes

toward social and personal experimentation and shifting perceptions of what constitutes the "good life." The downward movement of the remarriage rate also suggests that divorced people, as well as young single adults, are postponing marriage or might be deciding not to remarry. Perhaps, too, more open discussion and heightened public concern about divorce have instilled greater caution among marriageable people.

Whatever the explanation, remarriage rates comprise a significant aspect of the changing marriage patterns of the United States. First, according to U.S. census data for 1975, four divorced people out of five remarry by middle age. Second, census data show that young adults have been postponing marriage and have been shortening the intervals between first marriage and divorce (7.7 years for men and 7.9 years for women in 1967; 6.7 years for men and 7.3 years for women in 1975) and between remarriage and redivorce (6.2 years for men and 7.6 years for women in 1967; 5.0 years for men and 5.5 years for women in 1975).[7] An interval of approximately three years between divorce and remarriage appears to be rather stable. Thus marital events are being compressed into a shorter period of time; and for some people, more marital events are occurring during their lives.

The data presented for marriage, divorce, and remarriage provide evidence for both stability and change in the marital aspect of family life. The data suggest that marriage as a social institution is stable; that is, most people marry or, if divorced, they tend to remarry. The implication is that most people prefer marriage as a way of living. The change is occurring in the timing of marriage and in the number of marital events experienced. In other words, young adults are postponing remarriage. The implication is that although marriage as a social institution is stable, individual marriages are not. This summary should be cautiously interpreted, however, in light of a statistic of great importance: the majority of marriages in the United States (approximately two out of every three)[8] last until "death do us part."

Living Arrangements of Adults and Children

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, a *family* is a group of people who live together and who are related by blood, marriage, or adoption. An *adult* is a person 18 years old or older, who may or may not be married, and who is not institutionalized. Given these definitions, in 1976 there were 144 million adults. Of these adults, 120 million (83 percent) had established their own households; that is, they lived in a dwelling designed for one family or for a person living alone. Of the 120 million adults who had established their own households, 94 million (78 percent) were involved in husband-wife households, 15 million (13 percent) lived alone, and 11 million (9 percent) lived in households with two or more people with whom they had no blood, marital, or adoptive relationship.[9] These household characteristics show that most adults have established their own households, that a substantial majority of these households are comprised of adults married and living together, and that a fairly large number of adults live alone.

A noteworthy change in household composition is in the proportion of adults who live alone. Between 1970 and 1976, this proportion rose by 40 percent. The increase can be explained by the growing numbers of elderly people

who prefer lone living and can afford it, of divorced people who have no children, and of young people who leave their parental homes and establish their own households before marriage.

According to Glick and Norton, lone living rose between 1970 and 1976 at a faster rate for men than for women (57 percent versus 32 percent).[10] However, this increase is due partly to the increased numbers of divorces that involve children who usually remain with the mother. The increase is also larger for men because the base is smaller; that is, fewer one-person households are established by men.

According to unpublished 1978 current population survey data reported by Glick and Norton, there were in the United States 63.2 million children under the age of 18. Of these children, 49 million (77.7 percent) lived with two parents, nearly two-thirds of whom were married once and were the child's natural parents, 11.8 million children (18.6 percent) lived with one parent and most often the mother, and 2.3 million children (3.7 percent) lived with neither parent.[11]

Data describing the living arrangements of adults and children suggest that fairly traditional arrangements prevail. One of the more noticeable changes in living arrangements for the adult population is in the number of adults who live alone. These adults are generally young and single, or elderly and widowed. One notable characteristic of living arrangements for children is that most children live in two-parent households.

Working Mothers

According to the Department of Labor, 28.2 percent of all women in this country participated in the labor force in 1940. Of these women, only 8.6 percent were mothers. By 1974, the number of working women had increased to 45.2 percent. Of these women, 45.7 percent were mothers. During the 1940s and 1950s, the greatest employment increase was among women with school-age children. Since the early 1960s, the greatest increase has been among women with preschool-age children.[12]

The employment status of women varies with marital status. United States Department of Labor statistics for 1974 show that 25 percent of the women who were widowed participated in the labor force. Of the women who were married and living with their spouses, 43 percent were in the labor force. Women married but separated or with an absent spouse had a participation rate of 55 percent. Single women, many of whom were in school, had a participation rate of 57 percent. The highest participation rate, however, was for divorced women, 73 percent of whom were in the labor force.[13]

There is little doubt that more women are participating in the labor force than at any previous time in U.S. history and that increasing numbers of these women are mothers. Many factors may have contributed to this upward trend: the changing pattern of marital events, the increase in the number of families headed by women, and an increased life expectancy for females, for example. Other factors to consider are an increased number of white-collar jobs, jobs in which women are primarily employed; an increase in part-time employment

opportunities; and equal rights legislation and government action. Underlying these contributing factors are changing attitudes toward the employment of women and toward the women's movement, both of which involve efforts to extend the concept of sexual equality into the economic lives of women.

Marital Life Cycle

Events which have changed in the American system of marriage include the proportion of people marrying, the median age of first marriage, and the proportion of people divorcing. Another change is in the pattern of marital life cycle—in what husbands and wives do, in the number of chidren they have, and in the number of years they are together with and without the presence of children. Although this change results in part from increased life expectancies for both sexes, it results primarily from changing fertility patterns.

Constructing marital life cycles is a speculative process. Detailed information about the fertility patterns of older women is not available, and fertility histories for younger women cannot yet be constructed. Marital life cycles, therefore, must involve many assumptions. For example, it is assumed that the proportion of women marrying and bearing children will remain unchanged, that child-spacing within marriage will remain unchanged, and that the typical married couple will not divorce.

Given these assumptions, the marital life cycles for women during the mid-nineteenth and mid-twentieth centuries are somewhat different. Bane,[14] who worked with U.S. census data and related studies, constructed hypothetical marital life cycles for women born during the mid-nineteenth and mid-twentieth centuries. The cycles are summarized in Table 1. According to Bane's hypothetical descriptions, a mid-nineteenth century woman married at 22 years, bore the first and last of six children at 23.5 and 36 years, respectively, saw the first marriage of her last child at 58.9 years, was widowed at 56.4 years, and died at

TABLE 1.—HYPOTHETICAL LIFE CYCLES FOR WOMEN BORN DURING MID-NINETEENTH AND MID-TWENTIETH CENTURIES

	Woman born during mid-nineteenth century (6 children)	Woman born during mid-twentieth century (2 children)
Age at marriage	22.0 years	20.8 years
Age at birth of first child	23.5	22.3
Age at birth of last child	36.0	24.8
Age at first marriage of last child	58.9	47.7
Age when widowed	56.4	67.7
Age at own death	60.7	77.1

60.7 years. Her mid-twentieth century cohort married younger (at 20.8 years), bore the first and last of two children at 22.3 and 24.8 years, respectively, saw the first marriage of her last child at 47.7 years, was widowed at 67.7 years, and died at 77.1 years.

Obviously, the marital life histories of mid-twentieth century women have not been completed; and several events—such as the median age of first marriage—may be changing and thus may alter the projections. Nevertheless, to the extent that they are accurate, the hypothetical histories suggest changing marital life patterns during the coming decades. For example, marriages will last longer (47 years, rather than 34 years), child-rearing will span fewer years (25 years, rather than 35 years), married couples will have more years together without the presence of children (22 years, rather than 1.5 years), and couples will have more years together when neither will be employed, although easing mandatory retirements may alter this situation.

If the marital life cycle continues to change and to change in the directions hypothesized, then a number of questions might well be pondered. How will people spend the years in which they do not have to rear children or to work for money? How will increased leisure time affect marital relationships, especially after children are reared? Will people experience more or less satisfaction with marriage?

Difficulties in Measuring Family Change

The difficulties in measuring family change are numerous. One problem area is with the frameworks available for the study of family change. Some frameworks are cosmic. They encompass all possible variables and become unwieldy with research demands for gathering relevant data. Other frameworks are simplistic. They often reduce a complex subject like the family to a single set of variables (for instance, economic variables) presumed to precipitate or cause family change without interacting with other factors such as philosophical predispositions or personality characteristics.

A second difficulty is the lack of historical data for contemporary questions. It is widely believed, for example, that the extended family in the United States is declining and that the decline represents a loss of family ties and feelings. Given available data and methods of research, it is difficult to determine whether or to what extent the extended family existed, for which groups, during which periods, and under what conditions. It is also difficult to specify the ways in which extended families in the past contributed to family life or to what extent those contributions have increased, diminished, or remained unchanged.

A third difficulty concerns the gap between ideals and behavior. Ideals are not always expressed, nor do they always indicate what people do. Behavior does not always reflect ideals, whether they be personal or social in nature. It is difficult today to determine the match between ideals and behavior. It is even more difficult to identify attitudes of the past or to reconstruct past behavior.

A fourth difficulty involves perspectives that may vary by sex, class, and generation. For example, wife-beating was once associated with the economic

class. Contemporary research, however, suggests that wife-beating cuts across economic lines. Some people, therefore, conclude that wife-beating is increasing. While this may be true, it may also be true that fewer wives silently accept such treatment or that social intolerance of this behavior is increasing.

Summary and Conclusion

In some respects, the American family has changed. Long-term trend data suggest that marriage, divorce, and remarriage rates have increased; the median age of first marriage has shown a slight rise, especially for women; more adults live alone; more mothers work outside the home; family size is decreasing; and marital events are compressed into a shorter period of time.

Other changes appear to be occurring but are difficult to document. For example, almost all of today's children live with at least one parent; and the majority of children live with both natural parents. Whether or not this represents a significant departure from the past is difficult to determine from available data.

The changes which have been identified and documented suggest that both change and stability are evident in the American family system. As institutions, both marriage and the family continue to persist and, in fact, appear to be preferred living arrangements for adults and children. As processes, marriage and the family appear to be undergoing change.

The changes selected for review, however, cannot possibly address all the changes thought to have occurred or to be occurring in the American family. For example, although family size and structure are changing, it is difficult to assert the cause or causes of these changes or the way in which certain factors—such as urbanization and industrialization—have influenced the changes. Although the role of women is changing, it is too soon to determine whether motherhood is being accepted as an episode in a woman's life rather than as her life's work. Further, it is difficult to predict whether motherhood as episodic will permanently change family structure or in what ways. The economic and child-socializing functions of the family may be changing, but the effect of this possible change on the intimate relationships within the family context is unclear.

Much more study is required toward the end of better understanding the family system, how well it performs its traditional responsibilities, and to what extent it may or may not be undergoing change. Great attention has been focused on family income, for example, as if the amount of income and the principal wage earner were determinants of certain family processes or problems. Very little is known about the way in which income exerts influence on individual families and family members, the real deprivations families experience, and the relative deprivations they feel. Much less attention has been paid to the manner in which families spend the income they have, to the kinds of opportunities they seize, and to the types of services they purchase.

A second set of questions for study involves family roles. The specific activities of adults and children inside the family and in other institutions, the amount of time family members spend together and in separate activities, the satisfaction family members derive from the activities, and the degree to which family mem-

bers nurture or hinder personal freedom are all areas that need further examination.

Although cultural diversity is widely acknowledged, family diversity is less well understood. Educators need to become more aware of the similarities and the differences among families and within and across class, ethnic, and racial groups.

Human sexual development and sexual behavior are important to the study of the family. Sexual behavior in and out of marriage, patterns of romantic encounters, sexual differentiation, and patterns of prolonged or transient love relationships need to be studied if a complete understanding of sex in family and social living is to be achieved.

Patterns of child-care arrangements have only recently been seriously examined. Much more attention could be directed to the kinds of child care available; variations in child care across time and within families; external influences, such as the school, upon children; and the compatibility or conflict between the socialization practices of the family and of other institutions.

Great attention should also be given to the linkage between family behavior and social behavior in other areas of society. For instance, while some institutions may attempt to help resolve family problems, in so doing they may actually contribute to family difficulties. Some family behaviors may be considered beneficial to preserving individual families, but such behaviors may be at great cost to the individual and to society.

FOOTNOTES

[1] Glick, Paul C., and Norton, Arthur J. "Marrying, Divorcing, and Living Together in the U.S. Today." Washington, D.C.: Population Bulletin 32:4; February 1979.

[2] U.S. Bureau of the Census. "Number, Timing, and Duration of Marriages in the United States." *Current Population Reports.* Series P-20, no. 297; June 1975. Table I.

[3] Glick and Norton, p. 6.

[4] *Ibid.* pp. 36-37.

[5] Ross, Heather L., and Sawhill, Isabel V. *Time of Transition: The Growth of Families Headed by Women.* Washington, D C.: The Urban Institute, 1975; pp. 40-41.

[6] *Ibid.* pp. 41-51.

[7] U.S. Bureau of the Census. "Number," Table H.

[8] Glick and Norton, p. 4.

[9] U.S. Bureau of the Census. "Household and Family Characteristics." *Current Population Reports.* Series P-20, no. 311; March 1976. Table A.

[10] Glick and Norton, p. 31.

[11] *Ibid.* p. 40.

[12] U.S. Department of Labor. *1975 Handbook on Women Workers.* Bulletin 297, pp. 25-27.

[13] *Ibid.* p. 17.

[14] Bane, Mary Jo. *Here To Stay.* New York: Basic Books, 1975; p. 25.

SECTION III. FINDINGS FROM OPINION POLLS, FACTS AND FIGURES: PIECES OF THE FAMILY PICTURE

In 1979 the International Year of the Child provided incentives for many organizations to publish their findings about children, parents, and the conditions affecting them in our society. The National Council on Children's Television has published these data in a synthesized form that is helpful to teachers interested in pursuing activities related to families. NEA is grateful to NCCT for permission to reprint "Profiles of Children in the United States" from the *NCCT Forum*. The article lists organizations that can provide original source references for those interested in additional details (see pages 36-44).

To supplement and update the NCCT material, NEA has added its own synthesis of information with selections from two studies conducted by Yankelovich, Skelly and White, Inc., and sponsored by the General Mills corporation: *Raising Children in a Changing Society* (see pages 45-70) and *Family Health in an Era of Stress* (see pages 71-82). Daniel Yankelovich has devoted many years to the study and analysis of changes in values and attitudes among American youth. A logical extension of his work of the sixties was to study those youth who are now the young parents in our society.

Raising Children in a Changing Society. The results of this report are based on a national probability sample of 1,230 families and a total of 2,102 interviews, including 403 interviews with the other parent in the same household and 469 interviews with children between the ages of 6 and 12 in the households surveyed.

Family Health in an Era of Stress. Interviews were conducted with a national probability sample of 1,254 families (defined by the U.S. Census Bureau as "two or more persons living together and related by blood, marriage, or adoption"), statistically projectable to all families in the U.S. A total of 2,181 interviews were conducted, 1,254 with a primary adult in the household, 664 with spouses of primary adults, and 263 with teenage children (12 to 17 years) of the primary adults.

Both reports carry blanket permissions for reproduction so long as the credit line of General Mills is noted. Teachers are free to use the valuable materials contained in these reports for courses or activities dealing with the family. Copies of the two studies are available from General Mills, Inc., 9200 Wayzata Boulevard, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55440.

Profiles of Children in the United States

compiled by Nicholas B. Van Dyck, Maria P. Robbins, Amber Gordon, and Mary Ellen Hannibal

There are 65,129,000 children between the ages of 0 and 18 in the United States. (U.S. Census projection for 1976.)

I. Children and Family Life

In crass economic terms, children were once a boon to the family economy; now they have become an enormous economic liability. (AOC)

Children cost alot.

The total costs of housing, feeding, and clothing one child, as well as educating him or her through high school, now add up to more than $35,000 by conservative estimates for a family living at a modest level. ("Costs of Children, Economic Aspects of Population Change,"/AOC)

The average family today has approximately two children compared to five in families of 100 years ago. (PTA)

Nevertheless, 90% of parents would do it again.

90% of parents agree that if they had to do it again, they would still have children. Most doubts were expressed by minority parents (28%) and single parents (27%). (AFR)

Three out of four parents want their children to be better off than them in terms of money and success. Only among college educated parents, as many as 34% say that they have no aspirations for their children as far as money is concerned. (AFR)

Among those who would have children again, 9% would have one; 41% would have two; 45% would have three or more. (AFR)

Over a quarter of American children suffer from poverty.

It has been estimated that a quarter to a third of all American children are born into families with financial strains so great that the children will suffer basic deprivations. (AOC)

The official index of poverty is the federal government's "poverty line." This is computed by taking the cost of a basic food "basket" for a family and multiplying by three. (AOC)

Gallup and Roper polls since 1946 have shown that most Americans believe that the official poverty line is drawn far below what actually constitutes poverty. (AOC)

One out of every six children in America lives in a family unit where income is below the poverty line. (C&S)

Hundreds of thousands of school children cannot learn their lessons because they go to school without breakfast, have no money for lunch, and return to a supper without meat or green vegetables. (C&S)

Preschoolers' diets often lack adequate amounts of important nutrients. For example, over 50% lack standard amounts of vitamin A. (POC)

In 1974, 15.5% of American children under age 18 lived in poor households; 33% of children in families with 5 or more children lived below the poverty line; and 41% of all black children lived in poverty. (Bureau of the Census, 1977. (AOC)

Over 10,000,000 children under 17 live in families with incomes below poverty level. These break down into 6 million white, 4 million black & others. (POC)

Since 1959, both numbers and percentages of children in families below the poverty line have declined. (POC)

The percent of black children in poverty families has fallen less rapidly than has the percent of white children in poverty families. (POC)

A study done in 1974 found that of every 1,000 children born into the top 10th of social and

economic status, 326 are still there as adults, while only 4 of every 1,000 children born into the bottom 10th ever achieve incomes in the top 10th. ("Small Futures: Inequality, Children, and the Failure of Liberal Reform", R.H. de Lone. N.Y. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1978.)

The single most important factor that stacks the decks against tens of millions of American children is poverty. (AOC)

Approximately 9.7 million children under age 18 live in fatherless homes. (PTA)

85% of children live in two-parent homes.

Over 650,000 children live with one parent because of divorce. (POC)

7 million children under 14 years old are being raised in families in which the father is absent. The number of black and other children triple that of white. (POC)

37% of parents agree with the idea that it's up to the man to be the main provider in the family. Men feel more strongly that this is the case (49%); working mothers strongly disagree (44%).(AFR)

Among parents, 82% agree strongly or partially that the mother of young children should go to work only if the money is really needed. (AFR)

Divorce rates are highest for teenage marriages. (POC)

The children of single parents appear to have more problems in their relationships with other people than their counterparts in two-parent families. They are less likely to get along with friends, less likely to like classmates, more likely to argue with parents. (AFR)

The number of illegitimate births has been steadily increasing in the U.S. since 1940. (POC)

Approximately two-thirds of illegitimate children are not adopted; most remain with the unmarried mother and grow up in fatherless homes. (POC)

In 1970, more than 5.5 million children were in families receiving public assistance payments. Over 80% of these families were fatherless. (POC)

For a total of fourteen to sixteen years, the average American child spends the better part of most weekdays not in the presence of his or her family, but in the presence of teachers or day-care workers and other children of the same age. (AOC)

More than half of the mothers of school-age children work.

During the past two decades, employment has become increasingly prevalent among mothers of school-age and preschool children. By 1969, more than half the mothers of children aged 6-17 were in the labor force. (POC)

Most children believe it's alright for their mother to work.

Both boys and girls believe it is alright for their mothers to go to work if they want (76%). (AFR)

Individual care is arranged for most children of working mothers (78%). Group day care is provided for a small proportion (6%). However, group day care facilities are steadily increasing (from 25,000 in 1965 to 45,000 in 1969.) (POC)

22% of parents believe it is the government's responsibility to provide good day care for the children of working mothers; 34% of minority parents believe this. (AFR)

In 1969, almost 900,000 children were served by public & voluntary child welfare agencies. Possibly no more than half the children in need of services are receiving them. Approximately 3 out of 4 children served are under 15 years old. (POC)

Over 500,000 children live away from their families in facilities ranging from individual foster family homes and group homes to large institutions. (CDF, National Legislative Agenda for Children)

In 1970, there were 255,000 children in welfare institutions, group homes, detention homes, shelters, training schools, mental hospitals, and schools for the handicapped; many remained permanent residents until they reached age 18 or even longer. ("Toward a National Policy for Children and Families, AOC)

In 1969, there were 249,000 children living in foster homes and 74,000 children living in institutions. The number of children in institutions has declined from 88,000 in 1959 and foster homes have increased from 144,000 in 1959. The average length of time children remain in foster homes is four years. (POC)

Project Head Start has serviced over 2.7 million disadvantaged children since 1965. Services available through Project Head Start include: social and cognitive learning activities; medical and dental services; psychological services; nutritional services; and family life activities. (POC)

Head Start summer programs have been converting to full year programs, and full year enrollment has been increasing.

The majority of children in Head Start are under age 6, although nearly a third of summer school enrollment is 6 years or older.

Although reliable statistics are scarce, there is evidence that child abuse is on the rise; there is also evidence that its incidence increases following unemployment and economic recession. (AOC)

Approximately 30% of all cases of physical child abuse require some court action to place the child in a protective agency. (C&S)

It's estimated that each year 10,000 children are severely battered; 50,000 - 75,000 are sexually abused, 100,000 are physically, morally, or educationally neglected. (PTA)

Contrary to popular belief, abused children exist within all socio-economic levels. (PTA)

Child abuse exists at all levels of society.

Approximately 1,500 abused children will die as a result of the "battering," and some 15,000 will become permanently brain-injured. (C&S)

Child abuse is a vicious cycle. 90% of the abusive parents were "deprived children": men and women who had little or no love in their own childhood, were often victims of abuse, and frequently married someone like themselves early in life. (C&S)

90% of child abusers were deprived of love in their own childhood.

Children institutionalized because they have been abandoned or abused fare little better and often worse than children institutionalized because they are delinquent, and large numbers of children move from the first category into the second. (AOC)

Two out of three parents agree that they have problems communicating with their children, especially on certain sensitive topics: sex, death, homosexuality, their own feelings and family problems. (AFR)

Most parents agree that it is best to discuss subjects such as crime and rape with their children. Lower income and minority parents are somewhat more ambivalent, with the majority of each group preferring not to discuss such things with their children. (AFR)

While the idea of seeking outside advice for problems with children is still foreign to most parents, 49% would like help dealing with drug problems; 42% would like to better understand new teaching methods; 36% would like to better handle discipline; 31% would like help teaching about sex; and 32% would like to understand nutrition. (AFR)

Most parents have problems communicating with their children.

Next to their friends, children find it easiest to communicate with their mothers. The people with whom they find it hardest to communicate are school principals (46%), teachers (41%), doctors (34%), and members of the clergy (32%). (AFR)

Regarding leisure activities, 46% try to buy educational toys for their children and 51% buy the toys their children want.

By a slim majority (54%), parents continue to believe that there is a difference in the way boys and girls should be raised. (AFR)

Minority children feel more pressure from their parents to excel in school, in sports, and in other areas of life. (AFR)

55% of parents believe that children should not know of their financial problems. Lower income parents believe this even more strongly (61%). (AFR)

Children reject the labels "culturally deprived" and "culturally disadvantaged" as descriptive of themselves. The acceptance of such labels is associated with lowered school attitudes. ("Exceptional Children" CDF, b)

Teachers hold lowered expectations for performance of the deprived or disadvantaged child.(ibid.)

II. Children and Health

Children born during the 1970's have an average life expectancy of 70 years. (POC)

Although the gap has been narrowing since 1900, white children still have a longer life expectancy than children of all other races. (POC)

Fourteen nations have a lower infant mortality rate than the United States. (AOC)

Infant mortality rates continue to decline in the United States. These rates vary with the child's weight at birth, which is highly dependent upon the mother's health. (POC)

In large cities, infant mortality is often linked with low income groups. (POC)

Overall, Blacks and American Indians suffer the highest infant mortality rates. (POC)

The risk of death in the first year is higher than that for any other year under 65. (POC)

Premature births, congenital malformations and postnatal asphyxia account for more than 50% of all infant deaths. (POC)

Over 90% of all births occur in hospitals, and nearly all births are now attended by a physician. (POC)

Minority children suffer most from diseases.

American Indian children die from heart disease, influenza, and pneumonia twice as frequently as other children. (CDF-a)

Among children 1-4, minority, children die at a rate 70% higher than white children. In the 5-9 age group, minority children die at a rate 40% higher than white children. (Monthly Vital Statistics Report, Vol. 23, No. 11, 1973/CDF-a)

Hepatitis, tuberculosis, gonorrhea and syphilis remain widespread threats to childhood health. (POC)

The incidence of tuberculosis is highest among blacks and other minority race children. (POC)

Accidents are the major health hazard to preschool children over age 1. Over 54% of these accidental deaths are related to automobiles and fire. (POC)

Dental needs of children are often neglected. In 1965, one of four children under age 19 had never seen a dentist. In 1974, 22% of American children aged 6-16 had not seen a dentist in the last 2 years. (POC)

Among children aged 6-11, one in twelve has a speech defect and one in nine has defective vision. (POC)

The incidence of blindness among children has remained virtually unchanged through the past decade. In 1970, there were approximately 44,000 blind children. The total future expenditures for these children are estimated at $1.5 billion. (POC)

In 1970, 23% of the population was not covered by hospital insurance. While children up through age 17 made up 36% of the total population, they made up 44% of this uninsured group. ("Health, United States 1975." Publ. No. HRA 76-1232, Washington, D.C. H.E.W., 1976)

A study done for the Carnegie Council indicates that the greatest liability suffered by the handicapped child is a constriction of his/her aspirations to adult roles - greater, in short, than the physical limitations themselves. ("Handicapped Children in America." Gliedman & Roth. Academic Press, 1978)

Car accidents are the number one killer of teenagers.

Motor vehicles are the no. 1 killer of Americans aged 15-19. (GYS-77)

In 1970, 132 children between ages 10 and 15 died by suicide; 817 children aged 15-19 died by suicide. (C&S)

Emotional and mental illnesses continue as major child health problems. In 1968, approximately 682,000 children under age 18 were receiving some type of psychiatric care. (POC)

An estimated 5% of children needing psychiatric care are receiving it. In 1968, approximately 10% of the 50 million school age children had moderate to severe emotional problems. (POC)

One out of three children from low income families have serious emotional problems requiring attention. (POC)

Children entering school are eligible to be screened and treated for physical and emotional problems under the government's Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment program (EPSDT). In the first nine years of the program fewer than one-quarter of those eligible had actually been screened. (Children's Defense Fund, "EPSDT: Does It Spell Health Care for Poor Children?" 1977.)

In 1971, 29,000 children and youth were in residential treatment centers, 195,000 in community health center out-patient services, 18,000 in community health center in-patient facilities. (C&S)

Between 20 and 25% of all children in this country receive whatever health care they get from the public sector, which is chronically underfunded and politically vulnerable. (AOC)

In 1970, 40% of children served by public child welfare agencies were being served for neglect alone, 20% for emotional problems, 25% for parent-child conflict, and 295 for illegitimacy. (C&S)

40% of public agency service to children is required because of parental neglect.

Such conditions as dyslexia or dyscalculia are confined to perhaps one half of 1% of the population, whereas in lessened degrees of severity, disabilities may affect up to 30% or 40% of children. (C&S)

More than 2,500,000 poor children receive medical care through public welfare funds (Medicaid). (POC)

Between 1950 and 1967, private and public outlays per person for health services and supplies increased more rapidly than ever before. (POC)

In 1940, one out of every two federal dollars spent on health went to children. By 1970, this ratio had fallen to one in seventeen. ("Age Differences in Health Care Spending, Fiscal Year 1975," Mueller & Gibson. Social Security Bulletin, Vol: 39, No. 6, 1976)

Many children receive no medical care at all. Experts estimate that in 1971 at least 10 million children under age 16 received no medical care whatsoever. ("Children & Decent People," Schorr. Basic Books, N.Y. 1974)

About one-fifth of poor and minority children have not seen a doctor at all in two years.("Health, United States 1975." Publ. No. HRA 76-1232, Washington, D.C., H.E.W., 1976)

The majority of parents agree that checkups are essential and that it is not enough to take children to the doctor only when they are sick. (AFR)

Among minority parents, more than a third (36%) do not feel that it is necessary to inoculate children against polio as they believe the disease has been cured. (AFR)

40% of single parents and 39% of minority parents believe it is up to the government to see that children are inoculated. (AFR)

In 1974, 5 million children aged 1-4 (37%) were not adequately immunized against polio. 40% were not vaccinated against rubella. (U.S. Immunization Survey, 1974)

Some 11 million teenagers are sexually active – more than 50% of the total population of youngsters aged 15-19. (PTA)

11 million teenage boys and girls are sexually active.

One million teenagers become pregnant each year. (PTA)

One million of the girls get pregnant each year.

9% of teenage mothers attempt suicide. (PTA)

One-half to two-thirds of all female dropouts cite pregnancy or marriage as the primary reason for not continuing their education.

Nine out of ten teenage mothers keep their babies. (PTA)

90% of teenage mothers keep their babies.

Death rates for babies born to teens under 18 are nearly twice the rate for babies born to women aged 20-29. (PTA)

Use of drugs has been reported among junior high school students, although in much lower proportions than the use of alcohol and cigarettes. In 1969, over 14% reported that they consumed alcoholic drinks and approximately 14% reported that they smoke cigarettes. Over 2% reported that they had smoked marijuana. (POC)

About one-quarter of the nation's teenagers smoke cigarettes, and they start at a median average age of 13. (GYS-77)

One in twenty teenagers has a drinking problem. (AOC)

Girls are as likely to smoke as boys. Younger teen-age girls are more likely to smoke than their male counterparts. (GYS-77)

Between 100,000 and 200,000 babies born each year are mentally retarded. (POC)

As of 1970, approximately 2,500,000 people under age 20 are mentally retarded. Of these, approximately 75% are mildly retarded (educable), 15% are moderately retarded (trainable), 8% are severely retarded (many trainable), and 2% are profoundly retarded (unable to care for themselves). (POC)

One-fourth of the cases of mental retardation can be linked to genetic abnormalities, infections such as German measles during early pregnancy, birth accidents or postnatal infections. (POC)

In the remaining three-fourths, inadequacies in prenatal and peri-natal health care, nutrition, child rearing and social and environmental opportunities are suspected as causes. (POC)

Congenital abnormalities account for more than 40% of all pediatric deaths in large hospitals.(POC)

75% of all retarded children come from impoverished families. (C&S)

There are many children who often display the appearance of mental illness, or are labelled as deviant, but whose behavior is primarily the result of a learning disability or of a minimal brain dysfunction. (C&S)

III. Children and Education

A majority of children aged 6-12 like their schools (52%). Girls in this age group like school more than do boys. (AFR)

65% of 6-12 year olds report that they like their teachers and their schoolmates, and a slim majority (52%) report that they like their principals. (AFR)

Among children aged 6-12, girls outnumber boys in choosing drawing and music as their favorite subjects; boys outnumber girls in choosing math and science; they choose reading in equal numbers. (AFR)

Many teenagers believe driver training should be stricter.

44% of all teenagers believe that required education for obtaining a driver's license should be made stricter. (GYS-77)

Many believe schoolwork could be more demanding.

40% of teenagers feel that their current school work-load is not sufficiently demanding. (GYS-78)

More than 90% of public elementary schools report having pupils with severe reading problems. Approximately three out of four of these schools provide some special reading instruction for such children. 54% of these schools provide separate special reading classes. (POC)

Mathematics and English are the favorite school subjects of teenagers. English is number one with girls (45%), while math is number one with boys (45%). (GYS-78)

85% of teenagers believe that college education is desirable. (GYS-78)

Only six states mandate family life education.

Only 29 states and the District of Columbia require the teaching of health education courses; only six of these states and the District of Columbia mandate the teaching of some form of family life education. (PTA)

A study on school suspensions showed that among 24 million children surveyed, one million children were suspended during the 1972-73 school year. (CDF-c)

One-third of the suspended children and parents interviewed said suspension was for "fighting"; two-thirds for non-violent misbehavior; 1.6% involved abuse of teachers. Nonattendance, tardiness, insubordination and smoking were common causes. (CDF-c/AOC)

Minority children represent a disproportionally high percent of both suspensions and expulsions. (AOC)

Over 15% of elementary school children are below their modal grades (grade level associated with age). There is a higher proportion of boys below their modal grade and higher proportions of girls at or above their modal grades. (POC)

Costs associated with education are rising. For example, the expense of maintaining school facilities increased more than 700% between 1939 and 1965. (POC)

Since the early 1950's, expenditures for health services for public school students have increased more rapidly than school enrollment. (POC)

Increasing amounts of Federal funds are being allocated to the education of both educationally deprived and handicapped children. (POC)

As of 1966, over 1.8 million handicapped children were provided with special education. More than 80% of these children suffer from mental retardation or speech impairments. (POC)

Federal funds to schools under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) have increased from under $1 million in 1960 to over $1.4 billion in 1970. (POC)

Under ESEA in 1970, over $1.1 billion were allocated for educationally deprived children; over $54 million on library resources; over $174 million on supplementary education centers; over $30 million on strengthening state departments of education; over $26 million on education for the handicapped; $7.5 million on bilingual education; and $9.5 million on dropout prevention. (POC)

More than 20 million children, 40% of all elementary and secondary school children participate in school lunch programs. Approximately 25% of those participating receive free or reduced-price lunches. (POC)

School participation in Federally-assisted child nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch Program, varies widely by region, with highest participation rates in the South. (POC)

Expenditures for educational audio-visual aids have been continuously increasing since 1962.(POC)

Elementary school enrollment increased sharply through the 1960's but will decline through the 70's as the result of the decline in child population. Enrollment in 1980 is expected to be virtually the same as in 1960.

During the 1960's, nursery school enrollment almost doubled from 500,000 to approximately 1 million. Enrollment in kindergartens also increased, but at a slower rate. (POC)

The proportion of black children living in urban poverty areas who are enrolled in nursery school is nearly triple the proportion of white children. (POC)

About 15% of children enrolled in nursery schools and kindergartens are full-day pupils. A higher proportion of black children than white children are full-day attendees: In nursery schools, 53% of black children and 24% of white children – in kindergartens, 27% of black children and 8% of white children. (POC)

Public nursery school enrollment has risen more rapidly than private nursery school enrollment. But public kindergarten enrollment has risen less rapidly than private kindergarten enrollment. (POC)

Preschool enrollment is higher in metropolitan areas than in rural or suburban areas. (POC)

Minority children account for approximately 20% of the nation's public elementary and secondary school enrollment. (POC)

Over 80% of elementary school children are enrolled in public schools. Enrollment in private schools is more frequent among higher income groups and in urban areas. (POC)

The dropout rate in elementary grades has declined from over 38% in 1925 to under 5% in 1960. (POC)

99 out of 100 children aged 7 through 13 were enrolled in schools in 1969. Enrollment in the elementary grades rose to nearly 37 million in 1969. (POC)

According to 1970 United States Bureau of the Census figures, nearly 2 million children aged 7-17 were not enrolled in school. These numbers do not include children who are: expelled or suspended; truant; handicapped; pregnant; or children in jails and institutions. (CDF-b)

There has been a trend toward the consolidation of school districts: In 1950 there were over 83,000 – in 1960 there were over 40,000 – by 1970 there were under 20,000.

As of 1971, over 43% of all school children were transported to school. Between 1% and 4% of these children were bused to achieve racial integration.

IV. Children and Justice

Since 1963, juvenile delinquency has been increasing at a faster rate than the juvenile population. (Children aged 10-17) (POC)

Delinquency has increased at a greater rate in the past ten years.

Arrests of juveniles are up 193% in ten years. (C&S)

Approximately 2.5% of all children aged 10-17 were referred to juvenile courts in 1968. (POC)

In 1968, the rate of reported juvenile delinquency in urban areas was more than triple the rate in rural areas. (POC)

Nearly four times as many boys were referred to juvenile courts than girls. (POC)

In a large majority of courts in 1966, the juvenile was not represented by a lawyer. (POC)

Status offenses commonly cover seven categories of behavior: (1) disobedience of "reasonable" orders of parents or custodians; (2) running away from home; (3) truancy; (4) disobedience of "reasonable" orders of school authorities; (5) acts which are permissible for adults but are offenses when children commit them, such as, possessing alcohol or tobacco, or frequenting pool halls or taverns; (6) sexual immorality, sometimes called a "lewd and immoral life," or being a "wayward child"; and (7) acting in a manner injurious to oneself or others. (AOC)

As of 1969, the most frequent charge brought against children under age 15 was theft (25%). 16% of the charges were violations of curfew and loitering ordinances and runaways; 11% were charges of breaking and entering; 9% were vandalism charges; and 4% were charges of auto theft.

Over half the property crimes are committed by persons under age 18. (C&S)

In 1970, 1.3 million children were runaways. (C&S)

Over 1 million children are incarcerated each year.

Over 1 million juveniles are incarcerated annually, and there is no evidence that incarceration reduces the crime rate. (C&S)

About 38,000 children under age 16 are in adult jails on a given day. This does not include city jails and lock-ups. . . It is likely that between 250,000 and 400,000 children are jailed annually. (CDF, b.)

Pre-teens (10-12) are exposed to many social problems through contact with their peers. 25% know children who use drugs, 62% know children who have stolen something; 44% know children who have been in trouble with the police; 28% know children who have run away from home. About 15% volunteered that they had been in similar trouble. (AFR)

In areas such as adoption, custody proceedings, neglect or abuse, children have few rights of their own. The presumed rights of the state or of the parents usually prevail without consulting the child directly or considering the developmental needs of the child. (C&S)

Although it has no basis in law, the principle of "parens patriae," the court taking on the authority of parents to do with children as it thinks best, without regards to their rights, has been the prevailing operating principle. (C&S)

The proportion of children under age 18 arrested as abusers of narcotics, hallucinogens and other dangerous drugs went from approximately 10% in 1964 to approximately 20% in 1968. (POC)

In the children and youth categories, the percentage of increase in drug arrests between 1960-1970 was 1,860%. (C&S)

V. Children and Television

Television is in 97% of American homes. (N)

Young children aged 2-5 view an average of 27½ hours a week.
Children aged 6-11 view an average of 24½ hours a week.
Teenagers aged 12-17 view an average of 22 hours a week. (N)

The average high school graduate has spent 13,000 hours in school and 18,000 hours watching television. (TNECB)

Kids watch a lot of television. Adults watch even more.

Families with children under age 18 watch substantially more TV than the U.S. average (U.S. average = 45.5 hours a week. Families with children under 18 average = 54.5 hours a week.)(N)

Children aged 2-17 constitute approximately 28.2% of the total viewing audience. (N)

Children aged 2-11 comprise the largest segment of the total population viewing television between 7 a.m. and 1 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. (N)

In the course of one typical year, the average child will have seen 25,000 commercials. ("The Selling of the Child" Choate/AOC)

Children watch more "adult" programs on television than programs designed specifically for them. (AOC)

The U.S. is the only nation in the world where there is little programming for children on weekday afternoons. ("The Family Guide To Children's Television," Evelyn Kay, N.Y., Pantheon, 1974)

Children's viewing habits basically mirror those of adults, with the highest proportion of viewing

hours between 8 and 11 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and 7 to 11 p.m. Sunday (with the exception of the children aged 2-5 who spend only 22% of their viewing hours in this time bracket). (N)

Pre-school age children (2-5) spend 40% of their viewing hours between 10 a.m. and 7:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Children aged 6-11 average 21% of their viewing time between 4:30 and 7:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. (N)

Among major television program types during the evening hours, children aged 2-11 favor adventure shows, situation comedies and variety shows. Teens also favor situation comedies and adventure shows. (N)

Many teenagers feel they watch too much television.

44% of teenagers feel they watch too much television. (GYS, 1977)

73% of parents believe that their children have learned many good things from television, while 23% believe it has been a bad influence. (AFR)

Most parents believe children learn good things from television.

Programs such as "Sesame Street" and "Zoom" have shown that TV can teach children specific skills. (AOC)

An estimated 15 million school age children receive a portion of their regular instruction through television. (TV For Learning Fact Sheet-1978, PBS/CPB)

Major Sources Abbreviation Key

AFR – The General Mills Family Report 1976-1977. *Raising Children in a Changing Society.* Conducted by Yankelovich, Skelly and White, Inc.

AOC – *All Our Children. The American Family Under Pressure.* By Kenneth Keniston and The Carnegie Council on Children. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, N.Y. 1977

CDF – Children's Defense Fund
- a) *Doctors and Dollars Are Not Enough,* A Report by the Children's Defense Fund of the Washington Research Project, Inc. 1976.
- b) *Children Out of School in America,* A Report by the Children's Defense Fund of the Washington Research Project, Inc. 1974.
- c) *School Suspensions,* A Report by the Children's Defense Fund of the Washington Research Project, Inc. 1975.

C&S – *On Being a Child,* An Inquiry into the Needs and Rights of Children and the Commission of the Church. Church and Society, Nov.-Dec. 1977.

GYS 77-78 – *Gallup Youth Survey,* 1977-1978.

N – *Nielson Television 78,* A.C. Nielson Co.

POC – *Profiles of Children,* 1970 White House Conference on Children. Washington, D.C.

PTA – National Congress of Parents and Teachers.

TNECB – *Toward a National Endowment for Children's Broadcasting,* Center for Action Research. Princeton, N.J. 1977.

Originally prepared for the IYC by Roger B. Fransecky and Associates © 1978. Reprinted with permission.

THE GENERAL MILLS AMERICAN FAMILY REPORT 1976-77

Raising Children In A Changing Society

Conducted by: Yankelovich, Skelly and White, Inc.

OVERVIEW AND SUMMARY

American families are divided between the belief in traditional and in new values but they are surprisingly united in their decision to pass on traditional values to their children.

This is the major theme of this study of American families and how they are raising their young children in a period of changing social values. The study documents and illuminates several dominant trends in child raising in America today.

THE NEW BREED

There is a New Breed of parents today, representing 43% of all fathers and mothers of children under 13 years of age.

New Breed parents tend to be better educated and more affluent. They represent the "Haves" rather than the "Have Nots." New Breed parents have rejected many of the traditional values by which they were raised: marriage as an institution, the importance of religion, saving and thrift, patriotism and hard work for its own sake. And they have adopted a new set of attitudes toward being parents and the relationships of parents to children. New Breed parents question the idea of sacrificing in order to give their children the best of everything and are firm believers in the equal rights of children and parents.

Compared to previous generations, the New Breed parents are less child-oriented and more self-oriented. They regard having children not as a social obligation but as one available option which they have freely chosen. Given the chance to rethink their decision, nine out of ten would still decide to have children.

Today's Parents

THE NEW BREED—43%

Not Important Values:

- Marriage as an institution
- Religion
- Saving money
- Patriotism
- Success

Characteristics and Beliefs:

- Parents are self-oriented—not ready to sacrifice for their children
- Parents don't push their children
- Parents have a laissez faire attitude—children should be free to make their own decisions
- Parents question authority
- Parents are permissive with their children
- Parents believe boys and girls should be raised alike
- Parents believe their children have no future obligation to them
- Parents see having children as an option, not a social responsibility

THE TRADITIONALISTS—57%

Very Important Values:

- Marriage as an institution
- Religion
- Saving money
- Hard work
- Financial security

Characteristics and Beliefs:

- Parents are child-oriented—ready to sacrifice for their children
- Parents want their children to be outstanding
- Parents want to be in charge—believe parents should make decisions for their children
- Parents respect authority
- Parents are not permissive with their children
- Parents believe boys and girls should be raised differently
- Parents believe old-fashioned upbringing is best
- Parents see having children as a very important value

WHAT BOTH GROUPS TEACH THEIR CHILDREN

- Duty before pleasure
- My country right or wrong
- Hard work pays off
- People in authority know best
- Sex is wrong without marriage

Raising Boys and Girls

One of the issues most sharply dividing the New Breed and Traditional parents is the difference in their attitudes toward raising sons and daughters Two out of three of the Traditionalists (68%) agree strongly or partially that boys and girls cannot be raised using the same rules, while only 31% of the New Breed agrees at all with this concept. The same outlook spills over to other areas. Traditionalists are more likely than the New Breed to believe that it is more important for boys to be good at sports than for girls to be. With their own children, Traditionalists stress the importance of masculinity for boys and femininity for girls—while again, the New Breed advocate more blurring of the sex roles.

Mothers' and Fathers' Roles

Only 32% of New Breed parents are willing to accept the role of the man as the main provider, while 48% of the Traditionalists support the idea. Yet in terms of their own lives—and how they handle parental responsibilities—there is less difference in practice than in theory between the two groups of parents. It is still the mothers in both New Breed and Traditional homes who have the main responsibilities for cooking, cleaning, shopping, taking children to the doctor and staying home when children are sick. What may be a change from the past is the fact that it is the mothers rather than the fathers who appear to be the main disciplinarians.

Discipline

The issue of discipline is far from resolved among today's parents. For the most part, mothers and fathers are divided into three groups: the Permissive (23%), the Temperate (51%) and the Strict (26%). A majority of the New Breed parents are members of the Permissive group, while the Traditionalists take a Temperate or Strict view of discipline.

The Laissez Faire Outlook

Involved with self and self-fulfillment, New Breed parents are not only more permissive with their children but many of them follow a rather laissez faire approach to child raising. There are sizable numbers of parents who believe that children should be allowed to dress as they want, eat whatever is desired (as long as they are healthy), play with the kinds of toys they want and do pretty much whatever they want to. But in spite of this, New Breed parents are as likely to spank their children when they misbehave as are Traditionalist parents.

Acceptance of Differences in Performance

If a permissive and laissez faire approach to child raising is one characteristic of the New Breed, acceptance by them of differences among children, including differences in levels of achievement, is another identifying factor. Parents are now split between those who don't push their children, because "it's their lives and let them be" (39%), and those who still demand a lot because they feel there is no other way to raise successful adults (56%).

THE CHILDREN

The New Breed and the Traditionalists represent two different approaches to parenting but both are raising their children to believe in traditional American values! What are the results? For the most part, the children are traditional in their views – perhaps as children have always been.

- They like their mother because she is a good cook and homemaker; their father because he spends time with them and is the "main provider"
- They do not believe parents should separate even if they are unhappy together
- They do not agree that parents should go on vacation without their children
- They do believe it is the mother's job, not the father's, to cook and clean
- And they think it's all right for parents to spank their children

Yet there are also some significant signs that a New Breed of parents may be raising a New Breed of children. The children of New Breed parents are:

- More willing (58%) to see parents separate if they are not happy than are children of Traditionalists (47%)
- More relaxed and well aware that their parents do not put the same emphasis on superiority in studies, sports, popularity and behavior as the parents of some of their peers
- More liberal in the acceptance of differences and in their readiness to play with children of other races
- More attuned to permissiveness. Among New Breed children, 64% say they will be less strict with their own children than their parents are with them, compared to 55% of the children of more traditional parents

The State of the Family

The large majority of families express satisfaction and confidence in the way they are handling their problems, the amount of fun and enjoyment they have with their children and the way the family works together. Compared to two years ago,* they indicate a still stronger sense of confidence in their own futures and abilities to get ahead. Yet for all this, there is a gnawing uncertainty among a sizable minority of the parents (36%) about the job they are doing in raising their children. Among those who are most worried in this respect are working mothers (44%), single parents (50%) and mothers and fathers with low incomes (42%).

The State of the Children

In answer to a direct question, 37% of all parents felt that children today are not as happy as they used to be and only 16% felt that they are happier. It is, in this case, the more traditional parents (42%) who feel this way rather than the New Breed (31%).

A Difficult Society

Undoubtedly, for most parents, the biggest problem in raising children is the world around them. Only 28% of the parents indicated that they were satisfied with the standards of today's society—with criticisms coming from both sides of the fence—the New Breed and the Traditionalists.

The problem is manifold: There is among parents the all-abiding fear of illegal drugs and their consequences, and concern about street crime and violence all around them and on television. Parents are having difficulty coping with a society in which their own children are exposed to major social problems and temptations on a large scale and at early ages.

Children in Trouble

Drugs, crime and alienation are not just adult problems. These problems can be found among the young as well. Among the children between the ages of ten and twelve who were interviewed, most of them knew other children in serious difficulties:

- Had been in trouble with the police (43%)
- Had tried marijuana or other drugs (24%)
- Had taken something that didn't belong to them (61%)
- Had run away from home (28%)

*The American Family and Money 1974-75.

Nutrition Labeling: Parents divide on the subject of nutrition labeling. One out of two makes it a point to check food product labels for nutrition information; an equal number feel that there is too much talk these days about what is and what isn't good for children.

Medical Care: The majority of parents (77%) agree that checkups are as essential for well as for sick children. This feeling, however, is strongest among younger parents, with 29% of the parents 35 years and over (and often with older children) resisting the idea of regular checkups. There is more controversy, however, about the need to inoculate children against polio. Over a third (36%) of the minority parents believe that this is no longer necessary since the disease has been conquered. And some parents see inoculation as the government's responsibility.

Education: About four out of ten parents agree that one cannot count on the schools to teach children how to read and write. They do believe that schools have the right and the obligation to discipline children who do not behave in the classroom or building.

Money: More than one out of two parents (55%) believe that their children should not be told about the parents' financial problems. However, by an almost unanimous vote, parents believe that children should be taught the value of a dollar.

Working Mothers: While a third of the mothers interviewed are working full time, the society around them has not yet come to terms with the concept of mothers—particularly mothers of young children—going to work unless they need money. Even New Breed parents feel this way, with 49% strongly agreeing and only 20% disagreeing with the idea that the mothers of young children should only go to work for economic reasons.

Consistent with this view, most parents do not believe that the children of working mothers are more independent and responsible than other children. Among all parents, 69% think that the children are worse off. Only working mothers split evenly on the question with 49% saying that their children are better off and 48%, not as well off.

Day Care: One reason for the strong feelings about mothers of young children working could be the ambivalent attitudes of the parents toward day-care centers. While supporting the concept, at least half of the parents question the quality of present facilities. By a vote of 51%, parents agree that they can never be sure how children will be cared for in day-care centers. Among minority parents, 59% feel this way.

Seeking Advice: While admitting to fears, doubts and feelings of inadequacy, most parents are reluctant to seek outside advice. In times of deepest stress – when children run away from home, are in trouble with the police, experiment with drugs – most parents say they would try to work out the problems themselves rather than go outside for help.

Parents would find it easiest to turn for advice to teachers, educators, child psychologists and members of the clergy. They would be reluctant to seek help from juvenile authorities, family agencies, social workers or health clinics.

Toy Safety: Parents are divided on accountability for toy safety. Forty percent feel that it is up to the government to see that toys are safe for children while the majority (56%) consider it to be the parents' responsibility.

THE BALANCE SHEET

None of the mothers and fathers interviewed in this study would deny that this is a difficult and complicated time in which to raise children.

Some of the difficulties:

- The pressures of a society where crime and violence are rampant
- The problems of coping with inflation and high prices, complicated for some by advertising which encourages children to ask for more and more things
- The contradictions between the new and the old values
- The special demands on working mothers, minority, single and economically disadvantaged parents and their children
- The need to strike a balance between permissiveness and strict discipline; between sacrificing too much for one's children and not enough; between demanding too much of children and not demanding enough

On the other side, there are the many satisfactions that come from being a parent – pride, maturity, self-fulfillment, fun and joy.

Taking both sides of the ledger into account, today's parents of young children have no difficulty in making up their minds as to what they would do if they were faced with the same decision again. Almost all (90%) vote for having children... but they would welcome help to make the job easier.

PARENTING

As parents discuss the various aspects of their roles as parents, many important trends, contradictions, ambiguities and conflicts can be observed.

- They resist saying that the average American family is not doing a good job of raising its children—but they have somewhat less confidence in their own individual performances as parents
- They question some of the basic beliefs by which families have lived in the past: the readiness of parents to sacrifice for their children, the children's obligation to look after the parents at a later date, the denial of the rights of parents to lives of their own if it means less time for the children
- While not yet a majority trend, there are also noteworthy signs that the new laissez faire attitude mentioned by the experts is beginning to take hold—with children allowed to decide how they will dress, what they will eat and what they will do

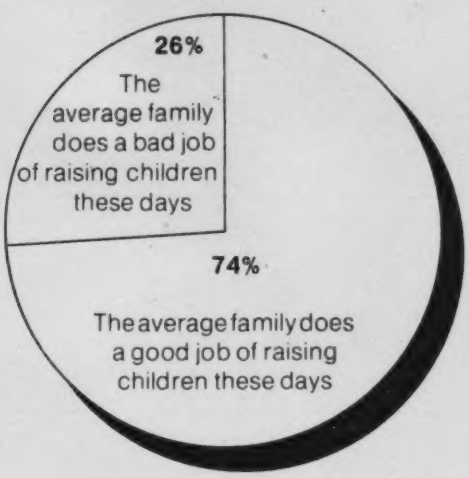
Yet in practice, there is also a continuance of many of the older prevailing beliefs and expectations:

- Mothers of young children should not go to work unless the money is needed
- Father is regarded as the main provider
- The hope that children would achieve greater economic success and material wealth than the parents have enjoyed

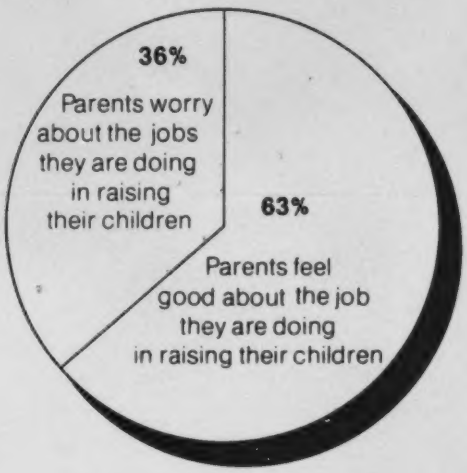
The Average American Family

Three out of four of the parents (74%) believe that the average American family is doing a good job of raising its children. Among the 26% who are critical of the job parents are doing these days, most of them (63%) blame the parents themselves, while the remaining third (34%) feel it is the society which is to blame.

ASSESSMENT OF OTHER AMERICAN PARENTS VERSUS SELVES
(Chart 7)


26%
The average family does a bad job of raising children these days
74%
The average family does a good job of raising children these days

Views of Other American Parents


36%
Parents worry about the jobs they are doing in raising their children
63%
Parents feel good about the job they are doing in raising their children

Views of Selves as Parents

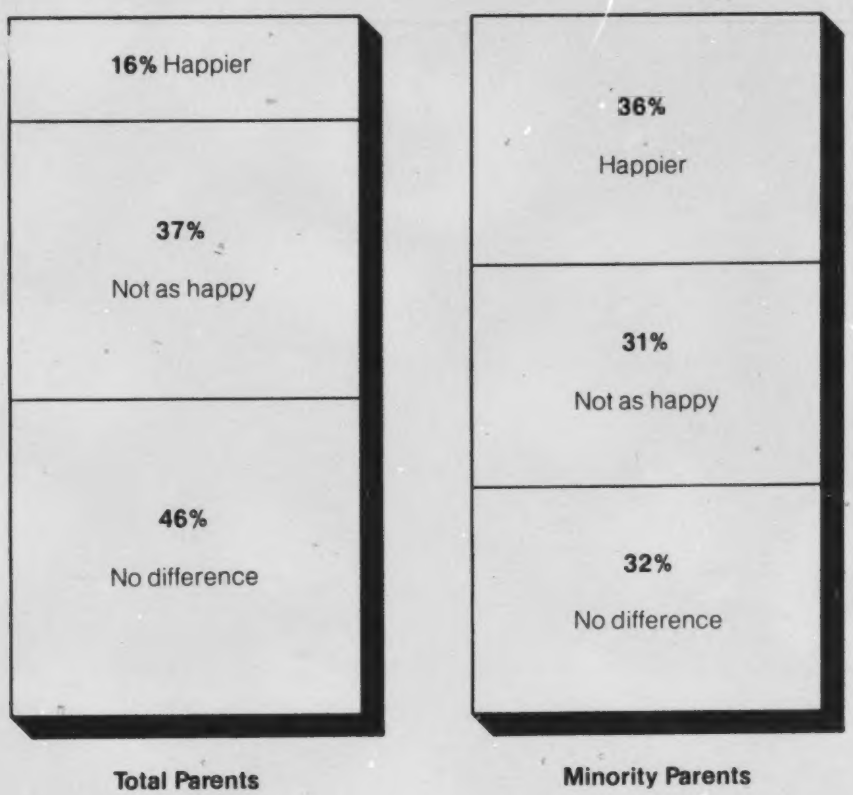
NOTE: 1% not sure

The State of the Child

While most parents do not question their own and other parents' abilities to raise their children successfully, they clearly have some doubts about the happiness of the average child today. In this sense, the past looks brighter, with 37% believing that children today are less happy than their parents were as children and only 16% claiming that today's children are happier.

A striking difference, however, is established by the viewpoint of the minority parents. They look around them and believe that on the whole, children are better off today than in the past (36%).

ARE CHILDREN HAPPIER TODAY THAN THEIR PARENTS WERE?
Minority Parents
(Chart 9)



NOTE: 1% not sure

VIEWS ON PARENTING
(Chart 11)

	Agree Strongly %	Agree Partially %	Disagree %	Not Sure %
For the children's sake, parents should stay together even when they are unhappy	8	23	63	6
People who decide not to have children are basically selfish	12	22	59	7
People have no right to count on their children to help them when they are old or in difficulty	19	35	43	3
It's important for parents to have their own lives and interests even if it means spending less time with their children	22	44	32	2
It's up to the man to be the main provider in the family	40	34	24	2
A woman with small children should go to work only if the money is really needed	52	30	16	2
Strict, old-fashioned upbringing and discipline are still the best ways to raise children	28	46	26	–

IMMEDIATE VERSUS LONG-RANGE GRATIFICATION FROM CHILDREN
(Chart 12)

	Total Parents %	Fathers %	Mothers %
Parents don't count on the future – expect pleasure from their children now	54	49	58
Parents expect to get even more pleasure from their children when they are older	45	49	41
Not sure	1	2	1

CHANGING SOCIAL ATTITUDES
New Breed Versus Traditionalist Parents
(Chart 20)

	Traditionalists %	New Breed %
Would welcome:		
More emphasis on traditional family ties	82	68
More emphasis on religion	69	52
More acceptance of rights of children to be different	65	68
Less emphasis on money	56	61
More emphasis on treating boys and girls alike	52	66
Would reject:		
More emphasis on sexual freedom	73	59
More acceptance of the rights of unmarried women to have children	62	52
Less emphasis on being open and candid with their children	55	54
Less emphasis on children getting ahead	51	40
Less emphasis on being pals to their children	44	38

VIEWS ON PARENTING
New Breed Versus Traditionalist Parents
(Chart 22)

Strongly or partially agree:	Traditionalists %	New Breed %
For the children's sake, parents should stay together even when they are unhappy	36	22
People who decide not to have children are basically selfish	43	20
Children have no obligation to their parents regardless of what parents have done for them*	64	73
It's important for parents to have their own lives and interests – even if it means spending less time with their children	64	68
It's up to the man to be the main provider in the family	80	65
A woman with small children should go to work only if the money is really needed	86	77
Strict, old-fashioned upbringing and discipline are still the best ways to raise children	77	68

*Two-part statement.

THE TRANSMISSION OF VALUES TO CHILDREN
(Chart 23)

	Believe and Want Children to Believe	Have Doubts But Still Want to Teach to Children	Don't Believe and Don't Want to Pass on to Children
	%	%	%
It's not important to win, it's how the game is played	71	21	8
The only way to get ahead is hard work	65	31	3
Duty before pleasure	58	33	9
Any prejudice is morally wrong	51	33	15
There is life after death	51	27	21
Happiness is possible without money	50	36	13
Having sex outside of marriage is morally wrong	47	25	28
Everybody should save money even if it means doing without things right now	42	37	20
People are basically honest	37	47	16
My country right or wrong	34	41	24
People in authority know best	13	56	30

NOTE: Not sures not included

RAISING BOYS AND GIRLS
(Chart 26)

	Total Parents	Traditionalists	New Breed
	%	%	%
Parents can't use the same rules in raising boys and girls	54	59	47
Boys and girls should be raised differently	52	68	31
It's more important for boys than for girls to be good at sports	33	40	22

BOYS AND GIRLS SHOULD BE RAISED DIFFERENTLY
(Chart 27)

	Total Parents	Fathers	Mothers
	%	%	%
Agree	17	21	14
Agree partially	35	35	35
Disagree	42	40	44
Not sure	6	4	7

Social Influences

Drugs top the list of social influences creating major anxieties among parents. This concern cuts across all groups of parents – but it is most likely to be mentioned by lower income families (40%), minority groups (39%) and single parents (42%).

Other social influences causing parents concern include permissiveness, broken marriages, crime and the economy. Compared to these, even factors such as pornography, affluence, advertising and integration tend to be discounted as sources of difficulties.

MAJOR INFLUENCES IN SOCIETY WHICH MAKE IT HARD TO RAISE CHILDREN
(Chart 31)

	%
Drugs	34
Broken marriages	28
Inflation	28
Permissiveness in child raising	27
Crime and violence in the streets	25
Both parents having to work to get along financially	25
Breakdown of traditional values	22
Decline of religion	18
Parents being more selfish and less willing to sacrifice for their children	17
Insecurity about jobs and unemployment	16
Television	14
Quality of education	14

PARENTS' ATTITUDES ON IMPORTANT ISSUES
(Chart 44)

	Agree or Agree Partially %
Crime	
In order not to frighten children, don't discuss danger of rape, muggings	
Total parents	**44**
Minority parents	50
Lower income parents	52
Medicine	
There's no reason to inoculate against polio; the disease has been conquered	
Total parents	**16**
Minority parents	36
The government has the main responsibility to see to it that children are inoculated	
Total parents	**27**
Minority parents	39
Single parents	40
Checkups are essential even when children are healthy	
Total parents	**77**
Minority parents	69

PARENTS' ATTITUDES ON IMPORTANT ISSUES
(Chart 44A)

	Agree or Agree Partially %
Overweight	
Is not a problem; children outgrow it	
Total parents	**38**
College graduates	26
Minority parents	50
Education	
Parents don't count on schools to teach children to read and write	
Total parents	**42**
Minority parents	53
Schools should discipline children when they behave badly	
Total parents	**81**
Minority parents	73
Money	
Children should not be told about their parents' financial problems	
Total parents	**55**
Lower income parents	61
Middle income parents	55
Upper income parents	43

Complaints

The children's complaints about their parents mirror many of the complaints of the parents about their children.

New Breed children suggest that their permissive parents may be faster to spank or hit their children than are the more traditional parents. On the other hand, New Breed children have fewer complaints about not being able to eat snacks or get the things they want.

THE CHILDREN'S COMPLAINTS ABOUT THEIR PARENTS
(Chart 55)

	New Breed %	Traditionalists %
Parents make children eat food they don't like	57	60
Parents make them turn off television	57	55
Parents punish them unfairly	39	34
Parents criticize their friends	35	28
Parents hit them when they shouldn't	34	31
Parents don't let them eat snacks	31	42
Parents don't buy children what they see advertised	27	35
Parents make fun of them in front of others	26	23
Parents take away the children's allowances	22	21
Parents don't spend enough time with the children	20	21
Parents argue too much about money	16	22

Expectations

New Breed children feel less pressure from their parents to excel in school, to be popular or to be outstanding in other ways among their peers.

CHILDREN'S VIEWS OF PARENTS' EXPECTATIONS OF THEM
(Chart 56)

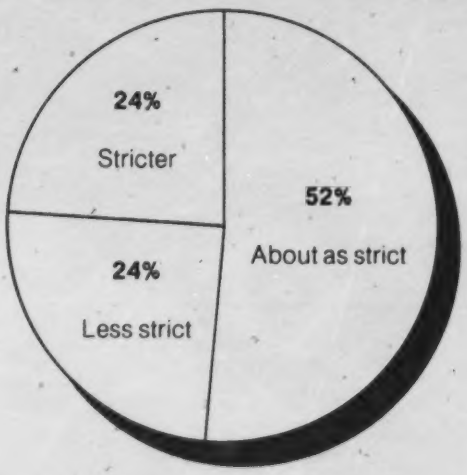
	Total	New Breed	Traditionalists
	%	%	%
Very important that they:			
Do well in school	75	66	80
Go to college	56	54	57
Go to church or synagogue	50	42	55
Set an example for other children	38	37	38
Save money	38	37	37
Be the best in the class	30	21	36
Be popular	25	20	28
Be good at sports	24	23	26
Win at games	12	7	16

Discipline

The parents' ideas about discipline are communicated to the children. Children whose parents this study designates as Strict are far more likely to see their parents as stricter than their friends'. In these households, too, the fathers are regarded as the real disciplinarians.

It is also the children whose parents are strictest who in turn are most likely to say that they will be even stricter when raising their own children.

HOW STRICT ARE PARENTS AS COMPARED TO FRIENDS' PARENTS?
(Chart 57)



CHILDREN'S VIEWS ON DISCIPLINE
(Chart 58)

	Have Permissive Parents	Have Temperate Parents	Have Strict Parents
	%	%	%
Parents are stricter than friends' parents	24	18	35
Fathers are stricter than mothers	33	31	46
Will be stricter with own children than parents are with them	29	28	36

Acquaintance with Children in Trouble

Children, particularly those between the ages of ten and twelve, are exposed to many social problems through contact with their peers. Among ten- to twelve-year-old children, 25% know children who use drugs, 62% know children who have taken something that didn't belong to them, 44% know children who have been in trouble with the police and 28% know children who have run away from home. About 15% volunteered that they had been in similar kinds of trouble.

ACQUAINTANCE WITH CHILDREN IN TROUBLE
(Chart 59)

	Total Children %	Children 10 to 12 Years %
Know children who have:		
Taken something that didn't belong to them	53	62
Tried cigarettes	50	64
Played hookey	44	58
Been in trouble with the police	37	44
Run away from home	21	28
Tried marijuana or other drugs	17	25

Communication Problems

Next to their friends, children find it easiest to communicate with their mothers. The people with whom they find it hardest to communicate are school principals (46%); teachers (41%); doctors (34%) and members of the clergy (32%).

PEOPLE WITH WHOM CHILDREN FIND IT HARD TO COMMUNICATE
(Chart 61)

	%
Principals	46
Teachers	41
Doctors	34
Priests/ministers/rabbis	32
Fathers	27
Brothers	22
Sisters	18
Mothers	16
Friends	11

THE GENERAL MILLS AMERICAN FAMILY REPORT 1978-79

Family Health in an Era of Stress

Conducted by: Yankelovich, Skelly and White, Inc.

THE BALANCE SHEET
FAMILY HEALTH ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOR
(Chart 1)

POSITIVE	NEGATIVE
70% say that most Americans are more concerned about health than they were a few years ago	**44%** find it hard to cope with the problems of everyday living today
60% do not take good health for granted	**48%** are cutting back on health practices as a result of inflation
46% have made some changes in lifestyles in the interest of good health	**82%** need less stress in their lives
36% exercise regularly	**75%** feel they are in good health without a checkup, so long as nothing bothers them
25% say they are eating more nutritiously	**54%** don't want to think that serious illness could happen in their families
26% are watching calorie intake more carefully than a year ago	**76%** are confused about all the government health warnings
76% of parents find it easy to communicate with their families about health	**73%** feel checkups cost too much for the average family
80% welcome more openness about mental illness	**75%** think doctors' fees have risen more than other things
79% welcome more openness about alcoholism	**57%** do not recognize depression as a health problem
75% have a lot of confidence in their doctors	**67%** do not recognize alcoholism as a health problem
80% feel they should set an example for their children in health matters	**72%** are less than well informed about health practices
80% recognize the dangers of over-medication	

A PROFILE OF THE AMERICAN FAMILY
(Chart 2)

	%
Total Parents With Children Under 18 Years:	**56**
Composition of Family	
Married and living with spouse	48
Separated, widowed or divorced	7
Single (never married)	1
One or two children under 18 years	39
Three or more children under 18 years	17
Age	
Between 18 and 34 years	26
Between 35 and 54 years	27
55 years and over	3
Race	
White	45
Minority	11
Socioeconomic Status	
Low	13
Medium	25
High	18
Adult Family Members Without Children Under 18 Years:	**44**
Composition of Family	
Married and living with spouse	38
Separated, widowed or divorced	4
Single (never married)	2
Age	
Between 18 and 34 years	9
Between 35 and 54 years	12
55 years and over	23
Race	
White	37
Minority	7
Socioeconomic Status	
Low	14
Medium	20
High	10

WHICH AMERICAN FAMILIES ARE CUTTING BACK ON HEALTH-RELATED ITEMS IN ORDER TO COPE WITH INFLATION

(Chart 8)

HEALTH ITEMS FAMILIES ARE POSTPONING OR CUTTING BACK ON TO COPE WITH INFLATION

(Chart 9)

	Total %
Buying high quality food	19
Having dental work done	16
Serving meat at meals every day	14
Going to the doctor for an annual checkup (adults)	13
Getting dental checkups	11
Getting new eyeglasses	11
Serving fresh fruits and vegetables	8
Having eyes/ears checked	6
Taking the children to the doctor as often as before	5
Others *	8

* Filling prescriptions (3%), having an operation (2%), getting immunizations (1%), getting allergy shots (1%), going to a psychiatrist (1%).

CHANGING FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS
(Chart 34)

	Total Parents %	Parents With Children Under 6 Years Only %	Adults 18-34 Years %	Adults 65 and Over %
Strongly Agree That:				
Strict, old-fashioned upbringing and discipline are still the best ways to raise children	47	29	34	63
A wife should put her husband and children ahead of her own career	47	34	37	62
It's up to the man to be the main provider in the family	46	35	40	56
Parents should sacrifice to give their children the best	26	25	27	39
Children have an obligation to take care of their parents when the parents are old	21	17	21	25

WHO PARENTS THINK SHOULD BE THE FAMILY HEALTH OFFICER
(Chart 35)

	Think the Father Should Take As Much Responsibility for the Health of the Children as the Mother %	Think It's Primarily the Mother's Responsibility to Look After the Health of the Children %
Total Parents	58	42
Mothers	54	46
Fathers	63	37
Single Parents	67	33

Note: Repercentaged without not sures/no answers

Teenage Pregnancy

Few issues have caused greater concern in the country recently than the high incidence of teenage pregnancy. Four out of ten parents of teenagers blame their own laxness and permissiveness but the majority see outside influences, especially peer pressure, television and the movies as primarily responsible.

PARENTS' VIEWS OF REASONS FOR HIGH INCIDENCE OF TEENAGE PREGNANCIES
(Chart 47)

	Parents' Permissiveness	Outside Influences, Such as Peer Pressure, Television and Movies
	%	%
Total Parents:	**37**	**63**
Sex		
Mothers	32	68
Fathers	43	57
Age of Children		
Parents of teenagers	40	60
Parents of small children only	29	71
Socioeconomic Status		
Low	43	57
High	31	69

Note: Repercentaged without not sures/no answers

A great majority of parents (84%) still want to be the main source of birth control education for their teenage children and only a very small minority are ready to see the schools take over this responsibility (7%) or to allow teenagers to receive information first-hand from doctors (6%).

PARENTS' FEELINGS ABOUT TEENAGERS AND BIRTH CONTROL
(Chart 48)

	It's Up to the Parents to Educate Their Teenagers About Birth Control	It's the School's Responsibility to Teach Teens About Birth Control	Teenagers Should Be Able to Get Birth Control Information from Their Doctors	Birth Control Information Should Not Be Available to Teens
	%	%	%	%
Total Parents:	**84**	**7**	**6**	**3**
Family Composition				
Parents of one or two children	88	4	7	1
Parents of three or more children	75	14	6	5
Parents of teenagers	81	10	6	3
Race				
White	84	7	6	3
Minorities	77	12	7	4
Residence				
Central city	84	7	6	3
Suburbs	77	10	11	2
Small town/ rural area	88	6	3	3

Note: Repercentaged without not sures/no answers

ATTITUDES TOWARD ALCOHOL VERSUS MARIJUANA
(Chart 57)

	Total Parents %	Parents of Teenagers %
Would Prefer to See Teenagers Drink Than Smoke Marijuana:		
Agree	37	36
Disagree	63	64

Note: Repercentaged without not sures/no answers

ATTITUDES TOWARD PSYCHIATRISTS AND PSYCHOLOGISTS
(Chart 58)

Seeing a psychiatrist or psychologist is a last resort. People should try to solve their own problems first.

	Agree %	Disagree %
Total:	**60**	**40**
Age		
35 - 44 years	51	49
65 years and over	74	26
Race		
White	59	41
Minority	64	36
Marital Status		
Single	50	50
Socioeconomic Status		
Low	67	33
High	54	46
Health Attitude		
The Concerned	58	42
The Complacent	63	37

Note: Repercentaged without not sures/no answers

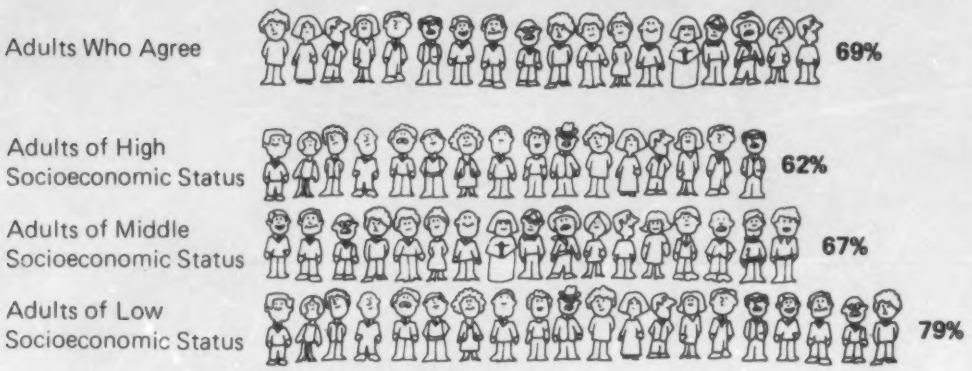
HOW FAMILY MEMBERS WOULD HANDLE CERTAIN PROBLEMS
(Chart 59)

	Handle It Alone %	Discuss It With a Psychiatrist/ Psychologist %	Wait a While and Then Go to a Doctor %	Go to a Doctor or Professional Right Away %
Smoking too much	66	3	6	10
Marital problems	57	11	4	5
Children with very bad tempers	50	21	11	10
Insomnia	43	2	33	15
Drinking problems	39	15	9	24
Feelings of depression	37	14	22	13
Children with eating problems	35	2	30	23
Nervousness and anxiety	26	12	29	25
Teenagers using drugs	19	24	6	36
Constant fatigue	15	2	37	43

THE GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO PROVIDE HEALTH CARE FOR THE POOR AND ELDERLY

(Chart 66)

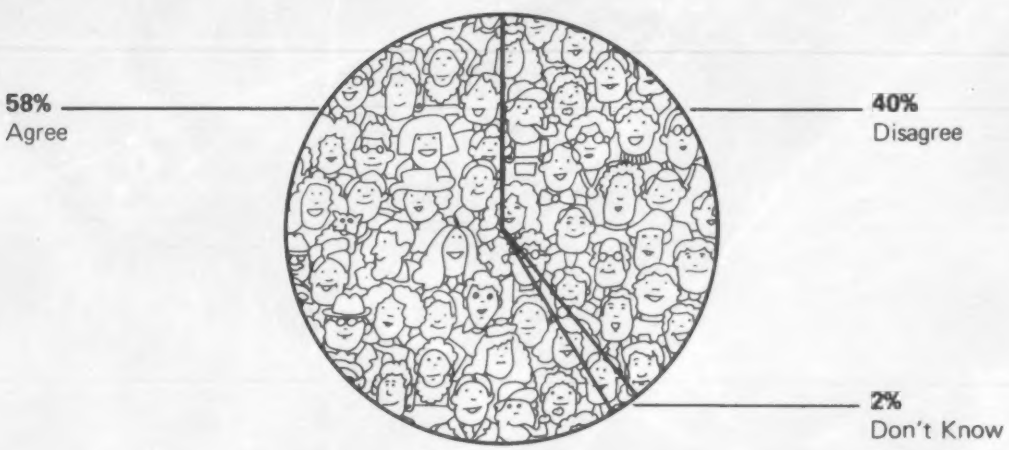
The government is not doing enough to provide health care for the poor and elderly.



ATTITUDES TOWARD PUBLIC CLINICS

(Chart 67)

The medical care at a public health clinic is not as good as that provided by a private physician.



TEENAGERS' VIEWS ABOUT THE CAUSES OF THE HIGH INCIDENCE OF TEENAGE PREGNANCY
(Chart 97)

	Total Teenagers %	Teenage Boys %	Teenage Girls %	Total Adults %
Parents are too lax and permissive	21	16	28	40
Outside influences such as peer pressure, television and movies	79	84	72	60

Note: Repercentaged without not sures/no answers

TEENAGERS' VERSUS PARENTS' VIEWS ABOUT THE CAUSES OF THE HIGH INCIDENCE OF TEENAGE PREGNANCY
(Chart 98)

		Teenagers Whose Parents Think:	
	Total %	Parents Are the Cause (38%) %	Outside Influences Are the Cause (62%) %
Teenagers Feel:			
Parents are too lax and permissive	21	29	17
Outside influences, such as peer pressure, television and movies are the cause	79	71	83

Note: Repercentaged without not sures/no answers

TEENAGERS' AND THEIR PARENTS' VIEWS ABOUT BIRTH CONTROL
(Chart 99)

	Total Teenagers %	Total Parents of Teenagers %
It's up to the parents to educate their teenagers about birth control	56	79
It's the school's responsibility to educate teenagers about birth control	5	9
Teenagers should be able to get their own information about birth control from a doctor	27	6
Birth control information should not be available to teenagers	8	3
Not sure	4	3

TEENAGERS' LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT KEY HEALTH QUESTIONS
(Chart 100)

	Very Well Informed %	Fairly Well Informed %	Not Well Informed %	Not Sure %
How Informed Teenagers Say They Are About:				
Nutrition and diet	40	42	17	1
New ideas on health care and physical fitness	31	42	26	1
Handling emotional problems	23	49	26	2
Preventive medicine	22	40	36	2
Symptoms of mental illness	11	37	49	3

SECTION IV. RESOURCES FOR MULTICULTURAL ISSUES: MINORITY FAMILIES

Minorities have special interests in the developments around the subject of the American family. They are quick to point out that our society's preference for the nuclear family as the social ideal excludes many of the strengths which are contributed to family living by the differing values of minority cultures.

Efforts to portray the details of the characteristics of minority group families suffer many similar shortcomings.

1. Statistics and other demographic information available through the Bureau of the Census are subject to low counts, miscounts, and other types of errors. Efforts to improve census data and to correct past weaknesses are now being mounted for the 1980 census.
2. Researchers who represent the cultures in question are beginning to compile more valid information about the family within their respective cultures. Asian-American and Hispanic cultures face particularly difficult challenges associated with immigration. With the exception of the Black culture, national profiles of minority families are not yet available.
3. Researchers, particularly sociologists and anthropologists of the majority culture who have published works about minority families, are considered suspect. This is because, in the view of many minorities, the information presented is too often negatively biased or lacking insight into the values, folkways, and mores of the minority culture under study.

Some of the differences which minorities see as often overlooked or misinterpreted seem to lie largely in the areas of values and attitudes. They include, for example, the following:

- Definitions of the family which stereotype the nuclear family as the only model are unacceptable.
- Preference for the extended family where multiple generations reside together is expressed. This preference is often maintained regardless of income. Accommodation of the aged is viewed as a responsibility not to be abandoned.
- Loyalty to the family is the highest priority and responsibility.
- Caring for own children and the children of others of the culture is a responsibility to be assumed, whenever possible, by adults within the culture.
- Sex roles are frequently prescribed and reinforced in ways which are different from the majority culture.
- Religion, philosophy, and/or spiritual values are of particular importance in defining family culture, values, and behavior.

For details of how minorities see themselves and their families in our society, NEA suggests the following sources as a beginning in exploring multicultural issues in the status of the American family. These sources represent products and

projects under the auspices of researchers who are members of the particular culture in question.

General Information on Minority Families

Dr. Aeolia Jackson
Social Science Research Analyst
Research and Evaluation Division
Administration for Children, Youth and Families
P.O. Box 1182
Washington, D.C. 20013

Asian-American Families

Summary and Recommendations: Conference on Pacific and Asian-American Families and HEW-Related Issues
Division of Asian-American Affairs
Office of the Secretary, HEW
200 Independence Avenue, Room 419E
Washington, D.C. 20201

Becerra, Rosina. *Information Needs of Low Income Minority Families with Young Children. Black, Mexican-American, Asian and Low Income Whites* (1978). School of Social Welfare, University of California, Los Angeles, California 90024.

Kim, Bok-Lim C. *The Korean American Child at School and at Home* (1978). School of Social Work, University of Illinois, Urbana, Illinois 61820.

Cabezas, Amado B. *Asian Child Development Project in San Francisco Bay Area* (1979). Asian Incorporated, 1610 Bush Street, San Francisco, California 94109.

Black Families

The State of Black America, 1979. New York: National Urban League, 1979.

Hill, Robert B. *The Strengths of Black Families.* Washington, D.C.: National Urban League, Research Department, 1977.

Report on Quality Education for Black Americans: An Imperative (September 1977). NAACP Special Contribution Fund.

McAdoo, Harriett. *The Impact of Extended Family Variables upon the Upward Mobility of Black Families, 1979.* Research and Evaluation Division of ACYF, P.O. Box 1182, Washington, D.C. 20013.

Hispanic Families

General Information/Referrals
Dr. Josue Cruz
Assistant Professor
Early Childhood/Child Development
University of Virginia
Charlottesville, Virginia

Hispanic Families: Critical Issues for Policy and Programs in Human Services (1979). COSSMHO (National Coalition of Hispanic Mental Health and Human Services Organizations), 1725 K Street, NW, Suite 1212, Washington, D.C. 20006.

Report of the National Hispanic Conference on Families (October 1978). COSSMHO, 1725 K Street, NW, Suite 1212, Washington, D.C. 20006. (Available September 1980)

Laosa, Luis. *Early Experience, Environment, and Development: A Longitudinal Study of Mexican-American Children and Families* (1979). Educational Testing Services, Rosedale Road, Princeton, New Jersey 08540.

Valencia, Richard R. *The Relationship of Parental and Home Characteristics to Mexican-American Mothers' Expectations* (1979). Center for Chicano Studies, University of California, Santa Barbara, California 93106.

Native American Families

The Schooling of Native America. Washington, D.C.: American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 1978.

A Multiethnic/Multicultural Curriculum for Young Children: The Yakima Indian Nation. Tuppenish, Wisconsin: Kamiakin Research Institute, 1979.

Martin, Philip. *Project on Adult Education: A Survey of the Needs of Adult Native Americans.* (Survey including demographics on Native American families in its second year. No data available until 1980.) Philadelphia, Mississippi.

Lujan, Philip. *Indian Studies Program.* University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma. (Project has just begun. No data available as yet.)

SECTION V. CULTS AND THE FAMILY

Jonestown brought awareness of the cult in our society to a shocked and alarmed public. "How could this happen?" "Why didn't *somebody* stop it?" "It must be against the law!" In the manner of a popular refrain—too much, too little, too late. And now that the tragedy is over—what?

During the decade of the seventies, many families in the United States have encountered a new and frightening presence in their lives. It has been estimated that six million youth have taken up some form of meditation and over three million young Americans have joined the one thousand religious cults now active in the United States. New forms of mind expansion and mind control have emerged in the form of religious cults and other forms of highly marketable mass therapies.

We live in a severed society, whose parts no longer complete a whole, or even join each other. Around us the fragments try to understand what happened. A young minister stares bleakly at the empty pews; a new teacher nervously gives an assignment, wondering if another act of violence will occur that week, and who will listen if it does; a teenager leaves a goodbye letter in an empty house. They are alone, trying to survive in a society of bits and pieces, while those who understand their need for support are only too eager to offer their help.

Who are these do-gooders? They call themselves by different names: Moonies, Hare Krishnas, Divine Light Missioners, Children of God, the Church of Scientology—hundreds of groups, but all with the same pitch. Come and join us, we are your family. Call on us when you are in need. You will never feel alone again. They do not add why you will not be alone again. The price for admission is your mind.

The most vulnerable group to be solicited are those who have the capacity for idealism; a realization, whether confused or focused, that America is not serving the needs of its people; and a desire for change. That change usually takes the form of an alternate community—much like the communes of the sixties—with its own leader, usually a self-appointed messiah, who supplies the cohesive force and authority which are missing in our leaders.

Thousands of Americans of all ages and every level of society have left their isolation to join the cults. Naturally the most sought after are the youth of the country—bright, intelligent, and suggestible. The methods of recruitment are all similar and should be understood by the communities they infiltrate.

To learn more about cults, their methods, and their effects on youth and their families, readers are referred to the following publication:

> Conway, Flo, and Jim Siegelman. *Snapping: America's Epidemic of Sudden Personality Change.* Philadelphia and New York: J. B. Lippincott, 1978.

ONE FAMILY'S EXPERIENCE

Parents confronted with an adolescent who has elected to enter membership in a cult face serious problems. What does the law say? Where can they turn for help? Can they retrieve their child?

The vignette which follows is the story of one family's encounter with a child in the cult experience. Countless others have had similar harrowing experiences.

The Way is a religious group that likens its organization to a tree, with the leader as the trunk and the assistants as branches. New members are twigs. Each member has the opportunity to advance in the hierarchy, for a price. (This is also the method of the Scientologists.) Twigs are encouraged to solicit the area schools, from junior high to college, with their literature. The content of their materials is worded so that immediate detection is not possible. Many of the schools, ignorant of their methods, have accepted these materials as part of their curriculum. There are several "family homes" close to the schools, whose older members stalk the children, much like drug pushers. Only the drug is more insidious and harder to detect. By graduation time, individuals who have been skillfully manipulated are ready to join the "family tree."

Linda Cook was a senior in high school when she was first approached. One of her best friends who was a member encouraged Linda to go to "fellowship" meetings. The cults deliberately use the terminology of organized religions to give an impression of acceptability. When Linda told her parents she was attending fellowship meetings on Sunday to discuss the Bible, they assumed that she was going to a local church group. With so many young people becoming interested in drugs and sex, the Cooks were even relieved that Linda and her friends were studying the Bible.

Shortly after she started going to fellowship meetings, Linda began withdrawing into her room more and more. She seemed to spend most of her spare time with her new friends or alone in her room reading the Bible. Her parents, still hopeful about her new interest, ignored early warning signals. When Linda's friends came over, they were excessively polite. The friends' visits also seemed a plus compared to most of the behavior the parents were accustomed to. Mrs. Cook did notice and mention, however, that it was unusual for Linda's friends not to focus their eyes when they spoke or listened. Their eyes seemed glazed, almost as if they had been taking drugs, although their behavior showed no other indications. Another early warning signal: cult members have been hypnotized, "brainwashed," during the indoctrination period, and most remain in that state for varying degrees of time.

Two months after Linda had first attended the fellowship meetings, school was over and she had graduated. This period of time is usually excellent for recruiting. Once members are eighteen, they are legally free of parental and even societal intervention. There is no way to reach them again. After graduation, Linda visited relatives in New Mexico, and her parents vacationed in Florida for two weeks. Linda returned home early and stayed in the house with her younger sister, Ann. During this time Mrs. Cook started having nightmares about their

home. Her intuitive fears were strong enough to alarm Mr. Cook, and they returned home several days before they were expected.

The dreams had been correct. The Cooks arrived to find their car missing and their home in a shambles. When Mrs. Cook finally found Linda, she belligerently informed her parents that the group had used the family car (which was not insured for other drivers) and had also used their house for fellowship meetings. Linda angrily defended her friends, informing her parents that Christ wants all people to share their worldly goods. When the parents worriedly asked about Ann, they were told that she was attending fellowship meetings also.

At this point Mr. Cook became furious. He demanded his car back, only to find a dent in the fender, the air conditioning broken, and debris all over the back seat. No one had any explanation. Neither was there an explanation for the food distributed all over the house, rotting on the floor, nor for the cigarette holes in two tablecloths. Were these the same polite youngsters who had been coming around the last two months? Then Ann walked in with a Bible in her hand, announcing that she was "born again." At this point the Cooks ordered all group members out of the house. Linda started screaming insults at her parents, quickly packed her bag, and left with her friends.

The nightmares had become a reality. The Cooks, frantic with the loss of their daughter, desperately tried to learn where she was. They searched her room for telephone numbers and found none. They called old friends, only to learn that no one had seen her in months. Finally, they were forced to call the girl who originally introduced Linda to the group and were told that Linda had gone to live with Christ. No further information was given.

Two weeks later Linda called her parents to tell them she was fine, but not to visit her. Her new family was taking care of all her needs. Who was this family? The Cooks called their local church group to inquire about The Way organization, but no one had ever heard of the group. They tried all the churches around and received the same response. Finally they called a Christian magazine, and were told that The Way was a cult group and not considered one of the Christian religions. It was equated with the Moonies and all the other offbeat "religions" and had bases in fifty-five areas, many of them abroad. It also had its own police force.

After calls to the local police, county government officials, school administrators, the clergy, lawyers, and psychologists, the Cooks learned a basic horrible truth. Linda was eighteen. No one could help her. People were interested. Yes, it was a shame that the cults were protected by the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. Too bad that young kids could be kidnapped that way, but there was nothing anyone could do about it. The Cooks could not believe their ears. They had raised Linda for eighteen years, encouraging her to be liberal in thinking and to accept all people, regardless of race, color, and creed. She was accepted in college as an honor student, studying art. Her high school art teacher had called her brilliant, with an exciting future. Now there was no future. And there was nothing they could do.

The next time the Cooks called Linda, she was not allowed to come to the telephone. They left a message but never received a call back. Mrs. Cook called

every day, but her calls were never returned. Her doctor prescribed tranquilizers, which were not much help. Finally after several weeks, Linda called to say that she was through with her instruction, whatever that meant, and would soon come home to visit. Her parents were not allowed to visit her, however. When Linda walked into her home again, they saw the same glazed look of her friends. But the eyes staring back blankly did not belong to their daughter.

Linda smiled and blessed them. She had found an apartment with a member called Nancy. When her parents asked about her college plans, she smiled again as though they were being foolish. "I am going to serve God," she said. "He doesn't need me to go to college." There would be no art work for her. She had taken a job at a local sandwich shop and would spend all her spare time spreading the word. The Cooks were interested in finding out whose word Linda would be spreading. Certainly no God they had ever heard about was interested in stunting the growth of individuals in his name.

Under the guise of interest in Linda's group, Mrs. Cook visited a fellowship meeting. This was the first time Linda had shown any of her old affection. She wanted her parents to understand what had happened to her and to rejoice in her new vocation. Mr. Cook, afraid that he might go in and kidnap her on the spot, decided he had better stay home.

At the meeting Mrs. Cook sat back in a chair, listening to the group leader address the members as if they were small children at Sunday school. Trying to remain objective, she became inwardly shocked at the distortions she heard. When she questioned the interpretations, she was quickly frowned upon. Their leader was described as having been personally appointed by God to reinterpret the Bible, and it was a privilege for his followers to accept his divine wisdom. He in turn would accept their time, money, dedication, and lives. Mrs. Cook went home that night without any hope for Linda, who could not be reasoned with—any word against the group brought hysterics. Her only plans for her life were to wander around the world teaching the philosophy of life according to the leader. The Cooks were despondent. Their daughter was lost.

In desperation they called all their friends and relatives. The suggestions they received were many and varied—have her deprogrammed, kidnap her and take her out of the country, get a court order and have her committed, send the police in and put her in jail. None of the suggestions sounded reasonable or financially feasible. The Cooks were a middle-class family with an average income. Where would the money come from?

By chance Mrs. Cook received a telephone call from a woman in the next county who had heard about Linda at a party where friends of the Cooks were discussing the situation. Mrs. Jordan had had a similar experience. Her daughter, Jill, was currently being deprogrammed at a ranch in the state of Arizona, and her roommate, Carol, was also being deprogrammed from The Way. Did Mrs. Cook want the telephone number? Grasping at anything, Mrs. Cook took the number and immediately called the ranch. She spoke to the comanagers of the organization, who would stage a kidnapping and fly Linda to Arizona where she could be rehabilitated. They could not promise total recovery, but most of their cases returned to normal lives. The cost could be thousands of dollars, however. Perhaps Mrs. Cook would like to talk to Carol Baker, who was finishing up her deprogramming activities.

Carol, who had been living at the ranch for six weeks, gave Mrs. Cook her first hope for Linda. No longer a member of The Way, Carol denounced the group and even promised she would describe its methods in writing. She said she would be coming to the Cooks' area soon and would visit Linda personally to try to help her.

A week later, Mrs. Cook received a twelve-page letter from Carol, describing the indoctrination techniques of The Way. Here at least was proof that Linda's group was not legitimate. Perhaps if the Cooks gathered enough material, they could present it to Linda without having to kidnap her and put her through a traumatic experience. At least it was worth a try. Mr. Cook had heard about an organization which helped parents called Citizens Engaged in Reuniting Families (CERF). He called several religious organizations for the address and was supplied with the information by B'Nai B'Rith. Known to be anti-Semitic, The Way was beginning to acquire a national reputation for adverse propaganda. Soon CERF mailed a great deal of material to the Cooks and gave several addresses where more information was available. After several weeks the Cooks had compiled a notebook of damaging facts. Their leader was perceived to be a charlatan who ran a subtle, dangerous organization. The Cooks were warned to be careful in dealings with him. He had money and power, and did not hesitate to use them. He encouraged his members to hire lawyers against their parents if the parents were foolish enough to try to remove their children from his grip.

The Cooks realized they were fighting a war, a type of cold war against an enemy not seen but always present—an enemy with no scruples or anything approaching rational behavior. The group had thousands of members, all the money it needed for protection, and a network of people ready to converge when necessary. The Cooks had only their will to save their daughter. No one could help them. They would have to do it alone.

Gathering all the information, including Carol's devastating letter, into the notebook, the Cooks invited Linda home for dinner. She accepted the invitation and talked nervously about her plans for joining the ministry. The parents wondered about her nervousness. Had information gotten back to the group about their investigations? Finally, after a strained dinner, they sat down with their daughter and showed her the notebook of indicting information. Linda took it to her old room and remained there for a long time. When she came out, shaking with fury, she screamed at her parents and hysterically left the house, refusing ever to return. But at least she had read all the articles. Perhaps she would retain some of the information.

The next week the parents started to receive unusual telephone calls. When Mrs. Cook answered the telephone, a voice said he was calling from Louisville, Kentucky, and was returning Mrs. Cook's call asking for insurance. Surely this was a bogus call. But why? Remembering that Carol Baker was from Louisville and had left her telephone number on her letter, Mrs. Cook then called the number to see if Carol knew anything about the call. Mr. Baker answered and Mrs. Cook introduced herself. She told him about Carol's letter and how much help it had been. When she asked if she could speak to Carol, there was a silence. Mr. Baker announced that he had no daughter named Carol and refused to give any information or comment on the situation. But he had answered the telephone to the name of Mr. Baker. Mrs. Cook hung up, upset and frightened. What were they

trying to do? Why didn't he mention Carol? Were they all in some odd plot? Did the telephone call from Louisville only confirm to the group that Mrs. Cook and the Bakers knew each other? Had Carol given her a misleading telephone number on purpose? If that was true, then why had she written the letter? What was going on?

A few days later an article arrived from CERF stating that a Way member in Louisville had committed suicide. There had been several suicides in the area and the police were investigating. The Cooks were afraid. What was going on, and how were they involved? Then they received another letter from Carol, who had gone home and was soon afterward persuaded by the group to return to The Way's college in Kansas. Although the group had filed a lawsuit against her father, Carol was happy to be back, and the Cooks should forget the bad things she had said about the group. The Cooks were puzzled. They were not dealing with anything they understood. But one thing was clear: they were being watched. The Way knew that Carol's original letter was in the Cooks' possession. The group also knew that the Cooks were trying to get Linda away. And the group was determined to keep her.

In the meantime, under pressure from both sides, Linda became increasingly nervous. Working behind the meat counter of a grocery store, she accidentally sliced off part of her finger, causing her to leave the job for several weeks. For the first time in nine months, the group was unable to control her activities during the day. When Linda turned to her "family" for help, she was told that God would help her. However, the "family" still expected her to continue contributing money for rent, food, and tithing. When it looked as if God was not going to provide, Linda called her parents and asked for help. Mrs. Cook, only too glad of a chance to intervene, took her daughter to the doctor and spent as much time as possible with her during her convalescence. She called the doctor, spoke to him privately, and explained the situation. The doctor offered to do anything to help and deliberately told Linda to remain out of work for two extra weeks.

At this time all the Cooks got together. Linda's oldest sister, Pat, had a plan. She would drive Linda to relatives in New Jersey over Easter and then to visit an old friend, Barbara, in a former neighborhood. Barbara would be persuaded to keep Linda there for a while and talk to her. All those involved in the plan were contacted and agreed to help. Subsequently Pat drove Linda away during Easter.

The group, furious, called the local leaders and informed them of Linda's exit. Linda's roommates called Mrs. Cook and demanded to know her whereabouts. When Mrs. Cook refused to tell them, angry insults and threats followed. "We're not worried," they informed Mrs. Cook cheerfully, "Linda belongs to us." Over my dead body, thought Mrs. Cook.

Linda returned from her trip, confused and shaken, showing the first signs of indecision. Relatives and friends had tried their best to persuade her to return home and begin college. Barbara suggested that she would come and visit her in the near future.

Recognizing the confusion at once, the group was prepared to deal with it and started pressuring Linda to join the ministry as soon as possible. The members

redoubled their efforts and Linda weakened, telling her parents she would be leaving in a few months to become a minister. The situation seemed hopeless.

Then Barbara decided she would come and stay with Linda in her "family" apartment. It soon became clear to the group members that Barbara was not one of them and actually opposed them, although she never openly spoke in opposition. The Cooks and Barbara then put as much pressure on Linda as they thought she could possibly handle without a breakdown. Hundreds of cult members had been unable to withstand group and family pressures and had subsequently collapsed under the strain. Finally, one week before she was to leave, Linda told her parents she had changed her mind; she would remain in the area. Although she would not join the ministry, she did plan to remain active in the group. And she would begin her art classes in the fall. It was a beginning.

Linda returned home that fall and the period of rehabilitation began. The group continued to call her and tried to see her. The Cooks refused to give Linda the messages and refused to let members in their home. They changed their telephone number to an unlisted number. Mrs. Cook drove Linda home from work and college classes. To her knowledge there was no way for the group to influence Linda for any length of time. Once the influence was broken, the hypnotic spell was broken. Cult groups need daily reinforcement to keep their members. Without it, members soon begin questioning their behavior and eventually leave the groups.

The Cooks began to feel relieved. Apparently The Way had given up on their daughter, and she could continue in her personal growth. At Christmas, however, Mrs. Cook happened to pick up a card and was shocked to find that it was addressed to Carol Baker, who was no longer in Kansas. Instead she had been sent to the Cooks' area. Carol was living on the same block where Linda was working and was able to see Linda every day. Well, Mrs. Cook decided, now is the time to test Linda's strength. She must have the will to reject the group herself. This time Linda rejected the overtures. She finished her art classes for the year and worked at a resort with Barbara during the summer. In the fall the two girls visited London, after which Linda returned to art school.

* * * * * * *

Linda was fortunate. The concentrated efforts of her family and friends eventually saved her life. For every Linda, there are thousands of young people who will never return to normal. At present there are no means of helping them. The cult groups are armed with money, organizational skills, and tax loopholes. Most of all, they are armed with the ignorance of the public.

What can be done? Probably the best way to educate the public is to begin giving the facts to the schools. All schools should have the names of cults, their pseudonyms, methods of attracting the youth, ways of infiltrating the curriculum, and places of operation. This information can be obtained from several citizen groups and their local affiliates throughout the United States. The facts should be included in the college curriculum for education majors and should be distributed to the communities as well. An in-service day might be devoted to covering the information in the schools, from the elementary to the college levels.

It takes only a short period of time to undo what parents have worked a lifetime to accomplish. This is the hardest fact to believe, but the Cooks and

thousands of other parents would be the first to corroborate it. They never thought it could happen to them, and any parents who think it can't happen to them may find their child the next victim.

APPENDIX

RESOURCES FOR PUBLIC POLICY ACTIVITIES

While legislative policymaking activities have been few, research and study for public policy have increased. Two listings which follow provide examples of such policy-based research activities. Foundations are supporting much of this effort.

Child Care and Public Policy

- *A Survey of Institutions Conducting Research on Child Care and Public Policy*

  National Institute of Mental Health
  Contract #278–77–0027
  Rockville, Maryland

Child Development and Social Policy

- Bush Foundation University Based Policy Centers

  The Bush Training Program in Child Development
  and Social Policy
  UCLA Graduate School of Education
  Los Angeles, California 90024

  Program in Child Development and Social Policy
  University of Michigan
  3433 Mason Hall
  Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109

  Bush Institute for Child and Family Policy
  Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center
  Highway 54 Bypass West
  University of North Carolina
  Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27514

  Bush Center in Child Development and Social Policy
  P.O. Box 11A Yale Station
  Yale University
  New Haven, Connecticut 06520

Family Policy

- Carnegie Corporation Effort

  Center for the Study of Families and Children
  Vanderbilt Institute for Public Policy Studies
  Box 15116 Station B
  Nashville, Tennessee 37420

- Ford Foundation Effort

  National Consortium on Families and Children
  Bank Street College of Education
  610 West 112th Street
  New York, New York 10025

  Merrill-Palmer Institute
  71 East Ferry Avenue
  Detroit, Michigan 48202

  Pacific Oaks College
  714 West California Boulevard
  Pasadena, California 91105

- National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) Effort

  Center for the Study of Families and the State
  Institute for Policy Sciences and Public Affairs
  Duke University
  Box 4875 Duke Station
  Durham, North Carolina 27706

Adolescent Pregnancy

Adolescent pregnancy is one social issue which succeeded in receiving congressional attention. Spearheaded by HEW Secretary Joseph Califano and Ms. Eunice Shriver of the Joseph P. Kennedy Foundation, Congress passed the Adolescent Pregnancy Act (P.L. 95–626) of 1978. On October 31, 1978, Secretary Califano opened the Office of Adolescent Pregnancy Programs under the direction of Dr. Lulumae Nix.

Guidelines for applying for grants under the Adolescent Pregnancy Act can be obtained through the *Federal Register* of Monday, March 12, 1979, page 13549. As of June 1979, a total of $8 million was available for such programs. Further information can also be obtained from:

Office of Adolescent Pregnancy Programs
c/o Dr. Lulumae Nix
Department of Health, Education and Welfare
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202

Other special resource documents which can be helpful to those interested in adolescent pregnancy include the following reports:

Federal Programs of Possible Help to School-Age Parents, Their Children, Families or Communities (1979)
Parent/Early Childhood Special Programs Staff
Bureau of Elementary and Secondary Education
Department of HEW/Office of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Room 2083
Washington, D.C. 20202

Survey of Programs for School-Age Parents (1979)
Parent/Early Childhood and Special Program Staff
c/o Beryl Parke
Bureau of Elementary and Secondary Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Room 2083
Washington, D.C. 20202

A Comprehensive Approach to the Problem of Adolescent Pregnancy: A General Survey of the Literature (1974)
Interagency Task Force on Comprehensive Programs for School-Age Parents
U.S. Office of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202

Families and Schools: Implementing Parent Education
Report No. 121 (1979)
Education Commission of the States
1860 Lincoln Street
Denver, Colorado 80295

Finally, a thorough analysis including cautions to be applied to statistics on adolescent pregnancy is the following:

Population Bulletin: Adolescent Pregnancy and Childbearing—Growing Concerns for Americans
(Vol. 31, No. 2, May, 1977)
Population Reference Bureau, Inc.
1754 "N" Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20036

Violence in the Family

Recently President Carter requested that Secretary Califano create an Interdepartmental Committee on Domestic Violence. The purpose of this committee is to review federal programs which could or do provide programs to assist victims of domestic violence. The committee report is expected to be completed by June 15, 1979.

In addition, the Administration for Children, Youth and Families (ACYF) of the Department of HEW has a newly created Office of Domestic Violence. This

office, in addition to the National Center on Child Abuse also housed in the Administration for Children, Youth and Families, will coordinate research and programs surrounding these problems. For further information write:

Dr. June Zeitland
Mr. Steve Leeds
Office of Domestic Violence
Donhoe Building, 6th and "D" Streets, SW
Administration for Children, Youth and Families/HEW
Washington, D.C. 20202